

“Revamped Inland Waterways to Power Northeast’s Growth, Boost Petroleum Exports to from Assam:” Sarbananda Sonowal

Guwahati, Nov 20: Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal said the rapid modernisation of India’s inland waterways, particularly in the Northeast, is set to unlock major economic opportunities and strengthen the petroleum supply chain and export routes connecting Assam to Bangladesh and Southeast Asia.

Speaking at the North East Oil & Gas Conclave 2025, the Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal said, “Under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji, the renewed focus on Inland Water Transport (IWT) has enabled smooth and swift cargo movement, reduce logistics costs and provide a reliable multimodal network for the movement of petroleum products and industrial cargo across the Brahmaputra and Barak river systems. This has not only revived one of the oldest and proven conduit of economic prosperity but also repurposed the economic activity and prosperity in the hinterland of the region.”

Sarbananda Sonowal said that jetties and terminals in Assam — including Pandu, Jogighopa, Dhubri, Bogibeel, Karimganj and Badarpur — have emerged as critical hubs for cross-border trade. These river terminals facilitate the export of petroleum products and large industrial consignments to Bangladesh and onward destinations, cutting transit distance, travel time and fuel consumption compared to road transport.

Sarbananda Sonowal highlighted that the transport of over-dimensional cargo (ODC) to Numaligarh Refinery for its expansion, and the ongoing movement of petroleum products using river routes, have demonstrated the operational efficiency and scalability of waterways as a long-term logistics solution. Year-round navigation ensured through extensive dredging and fairway maintenance enables uninterrupted movement of heavy cargo for refinery, exploration and downstream industries.

“The Inland Waterways sec-

tor today stands as the backbone of energy transportation for the Northeast, reinforcing India’s energy security and unlocking new trade corridors,” Sarbananda Sonowal said, noting that annual cargo movement on NW-2 is now approaching 6 lakh tonnes, driven by faster turnaround and reliable navigation.

The Minister said the government has undertaken ₹1,000 crore worth of inland waterway projects in the Northeast in the past two years, including permanent cargo terminals, ship repair facilities, tourist jetties and urban water transport systems. A ₹239 crore ship repair facility at Pandu is under development, expected to significantly reduce maintenance costs for river vessels that currently travel to Kolkata through Bangladesh for repairs.

Investments are also being directed toward modern river-based tourism infrastructure, lighthouse development, and skill and training facilities. A Regional Centre of Excellence in Dibrugarh, being



built at a cost of ₹188 crore, will train nearly 5,000 students in maritime skills and logistics operations.

Sarbananda Sonowal emphasised that Inland Waterways are central to India’s Act East Policy and the country’s goal of building a future-ready logistics ecosystem. “Our efforts are aimed at reducing logistics costs, boosting trade, and creating new employment and industrial opportunities. The Northeast is ready to lead

India into a new era of connectivity, sustainability and prosperity,” Sonowal said.

Sonowal noted that a number of major projects have been undertaken for the Northeast by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways in the past few years. He said that 76 national waterways will become operational by 2027. Cargo movement on national waterways reached an all-time high of 146 million tonnes last year, compared to just 18 mil-

lion tonnes earlier. During India Maritime Week 2025, the Inland Waterways Authority of India signed MoUs worth ₹40,000 crore to enhance the efficiency of waterborne logistics. He added that the unprecedented increases — 767% in operational waterways, 635% in cargo volume, 233% in investment and 62% in multimodal terminals — reflect remarkable progress in the inland waterways sector.

The Union Minister thanked the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) for organising the conclave and called for deeper collaboration between government and industry to accelerate private participation, innovation and infrastructure development in the energy and transport sectors.

Union Minister was joined at the event by Assam Minister Kaushik Roy, Assam Chief Secretary Ravi Kota, Joint Secretary of the Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas Vinod Sesan, and CII Assam Oil and Gas Chair S. K. Baruah, among other dignitaries.

In Brief

Mohan Bhagwat Stresses Unity, Peace in Manipur

Imphal: Dr. Mohan Bhagwat, Sarsangchalak of the RSS, spoke in Imphal about the organization’s civilizational role and its aim to unify Hindu society. He noted the unique nature of the RSS, emphasized the need for a truth-based understanding due to historical misinformation, and praised its founder, Dr. K.B. Hedgewar, for promoting a united society. Bhagwat highlighted values of truth and compassion, asserting that India’s identity is rooted in spiritual principles rather than colonial narratives. He discussed the RSS’s Panch Parivartan initiatives, aimed at social harmony and civic responsibilities, and encouraged the preservation of Manipur’s local traditions amidst ongoing efforts to restore stability in the region.

Assam Rifles Seize 800 grams of Cocaine

Agartala: In a joint operation with the Customs Department, Assam Rifles found 800 grams of high-grade cocaine in the center of Agartala City, Tripura, on November 17, marking a significant victory against drug trafficking, according to a release. It stated that the contraband, which was estimated to be worth Rs 8 crore, is one of the biggest cocaine recoveries in the area in recent months. Two people participating in the trafficking attempt were also apprehended as a result of the operation, which was initiated based on reliable intelligence inputs. The operation demonstrates Assam Rifles’ steadfast dedication to a drug-free society and its ongoing efforts to combat the threat of drug trafficking throughout the Northeast.

Red Fort blast case

New Delhi: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested four additional prime accused linked to the November 10 blast near the Red Fort in Delhi, bringing the total to six arrests. These individuals, taken into custody in Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir, include Dr. Muzammil Shakeel Ganai, Dr. Adeel Ahmed Rather, Dr. Shaheen Saeed, and Mufti Irfan Ahmad Wagay. They allegedly played significant roles in the terror attack that resulted in multiple deaths and injuries. Previously, NIA arrested Amir Rashid Ali and Jasir Bilal Wani, who were connected to the vehicle used in the attack and provided technical support, respectively. NIA continues its investigation, working with state police to apprehend all involved in the terrorist module.

Fire in Sivasagar

Agartala: Three people were killed in Tripura’s Dhalai district when a mini truck collided with the Agartala-Silchar Express at an unauthorized railway crossing. The accident occurred in the afternoon, involving a goods-laden mini truck that suddenly entered the track and crashed into the moving train. The truck driver and two occupants died at the scene. Efforts by railway authorities to close the crossing for safety have faced resistance from local residents, despite recent visits by officials. Police identified the victims as Pramesh Debbarma (23), Bupendra Debbarma (55), and Bina Debbarma (27), with the bodies recovered for post-mortem. Officials emphasized the dangers of unlawful crossings, reiterating the legal implications of such actions under the Indian Railways Act. This incident follows a near-disaster weeks prior, highlighting ongoing risks posed by illegal crossings that threaten public safety.

DAO Division Showcases Drone Innovation to Higher Defence Management Course Delegation

Guwahati, Nov 20: DAO Division under the aegis of Spear Corps hosted a distinguished tri-services delegation from the Higher Defence Management Course (HDMC) Secunderabad at the DAO Drone Lab in Assam. The visit aimed to familiarise the officers with contemporary developments in drone technology and ongoing innovation-oriented initiatives within the Army.

The delegation was briefed on a range of indigenous efforts undertaken by the division to enhance the utility and adaptability of unmanned systems. Select demonstrations showcased capabilities in surveillance-ori-



ented platforms, counter-drone concepts and improvements in repair and maintenance processes. The displays focused on broad-

ly applicable technological approaches that support operational efficiency and responsiveness.

Interactive discussions provided an opportunity to exchange perspectives on the evolving role of unmanned systems across various operational contexts. The delegation also gained an appreciation of the Army’s emphasis on self-reliance, innovation and technology-driven preparedness.

The visit further strengthened knowledge sharing within the tri-services and reinforced a collective approach to adopting emerging technologies and enhancing future readiness.

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Medical milestone: Tripura gets first heart-muscle reduction

Agartala, Nov 20: Tripura has recorded a major milestone in cardiac healthcare with doctors at Agartala Government Medical College and GB Pant Hospital successfully performing the state’s first heart-muscle reduction procedure. The landmark surgery marks a significant advancement for patients suffering from Hypertrophic Obstructive Cardiomyopathy (HOCM), a condition in which the heart muscle thickens abnormally and obstructs blood flow. The medical team carried out a Percutaneous Transluminal Septal Myocardial Ablation (PTSDA), a specialised and minimally invasive intervention. The technique involves injecting a controlled amount of alcohol into a precisely chosen artery to shrink the thickened heart tissue that causes obstruction. Health officials said the 46-year-old patient, who had been struggling with severe chest pain and related symptoms for years, is recovering steadily and has shown “remark-

able improvement” since the procedure. Doctors explained that many individuals with this genetic heart condition remain undiagnosed for long periods, putting them at risk of heart failure or sudden cardiac complications. One official said the PTSDA procedure directly targets the obstructing muscle and is widely regarded as one of the most effective treatment options for suitable patients. Until now, residents of Tripura requiring this advanced treatment had no choice but to travel outside the state, often at high financial cost. With this successful operation, the Agartala-based hospital joins a small group of centres in eastern India capable of performing this sophisticated cardiac intervention. Hospital staff described the achievement as a “turning point” in Tripura’s medical landscape, noting that the procedure was offered free of cost under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, ensuring access for even economically vulnerable patients.

TFTI Expands Creative Horizons with New Post-Graduate Programme

Agartala, Nov 20: The Tripura Film and Television Institute (TFTI), the state’s pioneering centre for media studies, has added a significant milestone to its young journey by introducing a one-year post-graduate certificate course in Film and Video Editing and Screen Acting. This marks the first long-duration, advanced programme offered by the institute since its establishment. In a press note, the Information and Cultural Affairs (ICA) department highlighted that TFTI—set up in the 2022–2023 academic session—has so far been conducting short-term courses in news anchoring, film appreciation, screen acting, production management, script writing, digital editing, sound recording, and sound design. The new programme is designed to provide deeper, more structured training for students aspiring to build professional careers in cinema and television.

Nestled within the government-run Nazrul Kala Kshetra campus in Banamalipur, TFTI has quickly carved a niche for itself. Launched on November 28, 2022, as a collaborative venture between the Tripura government’s ICA department and Kolkata’s renowned Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute (SRFTI), the institute brings industry-relevant pedagogy to the state’s creative talents.

In just three years, TFTI has grown into a key hub for hands-on learning, nurturing students in every essential component of filmmaking—from scripting and production to performance and post-production. The introduction of a post-graduate certificate course signals the institute’s next step toward evolving into a full-fledged centre for advanced media education, offering young aspirants in Tripura a chance to pursue professional training without leaving the state.

Sangai Festival Is a strategic tourism push, not just a celebration: Manipur Tourism Director

Imphal, Nov 20: Manipur Tourism Director Lourembam Bikram has said that the Sangai Festival should be seen as a major tourism strategy rather than just an annual celebration. He made these remarks while speaking at a one-day workshop on “Tourism Potential in Manipur,” held at the Manipur Press Club on Wednesday. The event was jointly organised by the Directorate of Tourism and the All Manipur Working Journalists’ Union (AMWJU). Bikram, who attended the programme as the chief guest, said Manipur has vast untapped tourism potential. Referring to a departmental survey, he pointed out that the state has identified 135 tourist locations—enough for any visitor to spend at least 15 days exploring Manipur’s natural beauty, culture and traditions. He added that hosting large festivals is a proven global method to attract travellers, and India too is promoting tourism through major cultural events. The Sangai Festival 2025, scheduled



from November 21 to 30, will highlight the rich cultural identity and heritage of Manipur’s many indigenous communities. Bikram said the event will showcase traditional arts, sports, Shumang Leela, and Manipuri films, besides hosting the Sangai Music Festival from November 28 to 30, which will feature local, national and international artists. Responding to concerns raised by civil

society groups and internally displaced persons (IDPs), Bikram said the government fully understands the emotional challenges faced by those affected by recent conflicts.

However, he stressed that the festival is planned with a long-term vision focused on economic revival, community involvement and tourism-led development. To support IDPs, the

government has arranged free stalls for them during the festival and waived all entry fees at the venues. Bikram noted that building infrastructure alone will not strengthen Manipur’s tourism industry. He said a tourism-friendly atmosphere, good hospitality, civic sense and cooperation from the public are equally important to drive sustainable growth.

For the whole Aravalli range, SC requires a sustainable mining strategy Stops new leases

New Delhi, Nov 20: The Supreme Court of India has mandated the formulation of a Management Plan for Sustainable Mining (MPSM) across the Aravalli range, crucial for sustainable ecological balance. The court, led by Chief Justice Bhushan R. Gavai, instructed the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) to work with the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) to define the Aravalli hills uniformly and prevent new mining leases until the plan is established. This decision comes in response to rampant illegal mining threatening the region, which extends from Gujarat to Delhi. The Central Empowered Committee (CEC) highlighted that the absence of a consistent definition has fueled reckless mining activities. The committee suggested designating any elevation exceeding 100 meters from the



lowest contour as part of the Aravalli hills, encompassing nearby landforms within the range. The Supreme Court accepted these recommendations, particularly focusing on protecting core areas from mining and promoting sustainable practices. As part of the MPSM, key ecological factors such as cumulative environmental impacts and restoration measures for mined territories will be analyzed. While the court refrained from imposing a total mining ban, it restricted future mining leases in designated areas, allowing only for

critical minerals. The ruling emphasizes the importance of the Aravali ecosystem as a vital “green barrier,” supporting biodiversity and climate across North India, particularly with several protected areas located within its boundaries. The Centre’s ongoing initiatives, including the “Aravali Green Wall Project,” aim to combat desertification and restore ecological health. While Rajasthan and Delhi acknowledged the committee’s recommendations, Haryana raised concerns over simplistically defining hills based solely on height.

DMK leader: “Good judgment” over the Supreme Court’s ruling on governors

Chennai, Nov 20: The ruling Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) on Thursday praised the Supreme Court’s verdict regarding Governors, calling it a “good judgement” that will have implications for future cases involving gubernatorial authority. Senior DMK leader TKS Elangovan asserted that if the elected Tamil Nadu assembly passes a resolution, the Governor is obliged to accept it. He emphasized that while the Governor may seek clarifications regarding

any constitutionally conflicting provisions, he lacks the authority to deny or reject any bill outright or claim that a bill cannot be passed. Elangovan highlighted the democratic principle, stating that the elected nature of the President, Vice President, and Prime Minister contrasts with the appointment of Governors, who must ensure that bills are in alignment with constitutional provisions. He criticized the current Governor, R N Ravi, for being obstinate and not

acting in the public interest, suggesting that he perceives himself as a monarch rather than serving a democratic role. The Supreme Court’s significant ruling clarified that there should be no fixed timelines for the Governor and President to grant assent to bills passed by State assemblies, and the judiciary cannot provide deemed assent. The five-judge Constitution bench, led by Chief Justice BR Gavai, unani-

The ruling established that governors do not have unlimited power to delay legislation passed by state assemblies.

mously decided that allowing Governors to withhold bills without due process under Article 200 undermines federalism. The ruling reiterated that Governors do not possess unlimited authority to delay bills from state assemblies, reinforcing the requirement for adherence to constitutional procedures.

6-year-old daughter killed as car rams scooter in UP

Lucknow, Nov 20: A couple and their six-year-old daughter were killed in a head-on collision between a speeding car and their scooter in Bulandshahr, Uttar Pradesh. The accident occurred near a police station, resulting in severe damage to the scooter and injuries to other occupants of the car and a pedestrian. Eyewitnesses reported that the critically injured car driver attempted to carry the girl to the hospital but collapsed.

Amid concerns over the Delhi explosion, classes at Al Falah Medical College resume

Faridabad, Nov 20: Classes at Al Falah Medical College in Faridabad resumed on Thursday, with first-year MBBS students attending from 8 AM to 4 PM. This follows a period of scrutiny due to the institution’s tie to an investigation involving ex-

plosive materials and the Delhi car explosion, where faculty member Umar Un Nabi was the driver. The college asserted its separation from the arrested doctors, stating their involvement was only in an official capacity.

Parents from various cities, including Chandigarh and Lucknow, accompanied their children to ensure their safety amid rising concerns. Some parents expressed hesitation about sending their children due to recent reports, like Kumud Kanojia

from Agra, who stated she hoped the college could ensure their safety. Others, shared feelings of uncertainty regarding potential staff shortages, contrasting reports from the administration indicating normal class operations.

Panic is sparked by a suspicious box near the Kanpur post office

Kanpur, Nov 20: On Thursday, police in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh, responded to a reported suspicious box near the Post Office in the Cantonment area, causing alarm among locals. A coordinated response involving the police, Army, and Bomb Disposal Squad led to the area being cordoned off for an investigation. Upon inspection, the box was found to contain only papers, a power bank, and a battery, with no explosive materials identified. The police later traced the name and address on the box, interviewing individuals linked to it. One of them was deemed mentally unstable, and early findings suggested that the report of the suspicious box was unfounded with no real threat present. Assistant Commissioner of Police Akanksha Pandey confirmed the swift action taken by security services and urged the public to report suspicious items, while cautioning against spreading rumors. Further investigations are ongoing, and authorities stated that the situation is currently under control.

A bomb threat is made against a school in Chanakyapuri, Delhi

New Delhi, Nov 20: A bomb threat email was received at Sanskriti School in Delhi’s Chanakyapuri on Thursday morning, which Delhi police have since deemed a hoax following an investigation. This incident occurred a week after a terror attack near Red Fort that resulted in over 10 fatalities. Earlier in the week, multiple court complexes in Delhi, including Patiala House and Saket, had to be evacuated due to similar bomb threats, which were also declared false alarms by the police. The threats had included mentions of bombs in various courts and CRPF schools in Dwarka and Prashant Vihar. This heightened alert comes after a deadly explosion near the Lal Quila Metro Station on November 10, linked to a terror incident. In connection with ongoing investigations into the blast, police are analyzing encrypted chats from platforms like Telegram and Signal, focusing on at least seven individuals, primarily medical professionals, who are under scrutiny by the Delhi Police special cell in collaboration with the NIA.

NIA investigates allegations of organ theft and trafficking in Iran

Kochi, Nov 20: NIA is investigating a health club in Kerala operated by Madhu Jayakumar, the prime accused in an alleged organ trafficking case. According to an affidavit, Jayakumar and three accomplices collected money through an account linked to Stemma Club, facilitating trafficking of individuals to Iran for organ harvesting. The affidavit claims that victims were coerced into donating their kidneys under threats, leading the accused to amass illegal wealth valued in money, cryptocurrency, and properties. Investigations revealed that organ donors primarily came from Telangana, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh, while recipients were from North India, with fees reaching ₹50 lakh per transplant. Jayakumar, arrested on November 7, is identified as a key figure in the international trade, with funds traced to a bank account associated with the club. His arrest has aided NIA’s uncovering of the trafficking network’s operations.

Chandrababu Naidu is optimistic about Bihar’s development under Nitish Kumar

Amaravati, Nov 20: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, attending Nitish Kumar’s swearing-in ceremony in Bihar, expressed confidence in the continuing electoral success of the NDA, attributing it to stability and progress for India.



assembly elections. Reports indicate that the NDA secured 202 out of 243 seats, with BJP winning 89, JD(U) 85, and other smaller parties contributing to the majority. Naidu was accompanied by IT Minister Nara Lokesh and attended the ceremony alongside prominent BJP leaders, including Prime

Minister Narendra Modi. Other BJP officials, like Samrat Choudhary and Nitin Nabin, highlighted the people’s endorsement of the NDA and the commitment to further development in Bihar, reinforcing the mandate for a ‘double-engine government’ led by Modi and Kumar.

“Why are you in Congress, hypocrite?” Shashi Tharoor’s commendation of Modi ignites a firestorm

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov 20: Shashi Tharoor, a member of the Indian National Congress, has once again stirred controversy within his party with his recent statements praising Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the Ramnath Goenka Lecture. Despite dealing with a cold and cough, Tharoor expressed his appreciation for Modi’s address on social media platform X, characterizing it as both an economic outlook and a cultural call to action. He highlighted Modi’s assertion that India has moved beyond being merely an ‘emerging market’ to becoming an ‘emerging model’ for the world, emphasizing the nation’s economic resilience.

Tharoor’s remarks have prompted significant backlash from Congress leaders, who questioned his loyalty



to the party and his understanding of national policies. Sandeep Dikshit, a Congress leader, criticized Tharoor’s perspective, suggesting that if he believes Modi’s and the BJP’s strategies are superior, he should reconsider his affiliation with Congress. In a dismissive tone, Dikshit doubted Tharoor’s knowledge about the country and posed a rhetorical question about his continued membership in Congress.

Another Congress figure, Supriya Shrinete, expressed

her disagreement with Tharoor’s praise for Modi, asserting that she did not find any merit in the PM’s speech. Tharoor, on the other hand, remarked on Modi’s commitment to addressing the challenges faced by the populace, claiming that the Prime Minister’s emotional appeal, as opposed to a politically driven agenda, was notable. Tharoor also reflected on Modi’s call for a national mission to reclaim India’s heritage and knowledge systems, while wishing that Modi had ac-

Tharoor faced criticism from Congress colleagues for praising PM Modi’s speech on India’s progress, raising questions about his alignment with the party.

knowledgeed Ramnath Goenka’s contribution to Indian nationalism through his use of the English language. His comments were released shortly after another controversial post where he defended BJP stalwart LK Advani concerning the latter’s role in the 1990 Rath Yatra, which had significant implications for the Ram Janmabhoomi movement. This pattern of Tharoor’s independent expression of views has created a rift between him and the Congress leadership, leading to calls for clarification on his stance and allegiance to the party.

In an 80-year-old widow’s five-decade battle to get a pension, the HC orders relief

Chandigarh, Nov 20: The Punjab and Haryana High Court has granted relief to an 80-year-old widow, Laxmi Devi, after a nearly five-decade struggle to secure her husband’s family pension and retirement benefits following his death in 1974. Justice Harpreet Singh Brar’s order emphasized the importance of constitutional courts in upholding fundamental rights, particularly for vulnerable individuals. The judge instructed the principal secretary of the Haryana electricity department to verify the widow’s claims within two months and ensure she receives all due benefits.

The court highlighted the judiciary’s role in protecting the rights of marginalized individuals, noting that when those without resources fail to vindicate their rights, the courts must step in. Justice Brar asserted that providing relief to those like Laxmi Devi is not an act of judicial discretion but a constitutional obligation anchored in Articles 14, 19, and 21 of the Constitution.

The case illustrates a long history of administrative inaction and neglect, as Laxmi Devi’s husband, Maha Singh, who served as a lineman in the Haryana electricity de-



partment, died while in service. Although she received a small ex gratia payment, her family pension and other retirement benefits remained unpaid despite numerous representations to the authorities.

The court noted the systemic indifference and procedural neglect that forced Laxmi Devi to seek recourse, accentuating the ongoing struggles faced by those most in need of justice. Justice Brar concluded that the courthouse should rise to defend the weakest among society, as failing to do so diminishes the constitutional promise of justice.

Trend that engineers and doctors are participating in anti-national activities

Police in Delhi to SC

New Delhi, Nov 20: On Thursday, the Delhi Police contested the bail pleas of activists Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam in the February 2020 riots conspiracy case, citing a troubling trend of educated professionals engaging in anti-national activities.

Additional Solicitor General SV Raju highlighted this concerning shift, noting that recent incidents, including a suicide attack near the Red Fort that resulted in 12 fatalities, have exacerbated worries about certain professionals, including doctors, becoming involved in such activities. Raju referred to Imam’s engineering background while suggesting the accused should not benefit from any trial delays at-



tributed to their actions. He presented video evidence of Imam’s speeches from 2019 and 2020, arguing they constituted involvement in “violent protests” rather than mere demonstrations.

The court proceedings coincide with an intensified investigation into a terror module linked to the attack, with the CBI, Delhi Police, and the NIA seeking in-

formation on doctors with foreign medical degrees as potential associates. The case underlines the serious implications of the accused being considered the “masterminds” behind the riots, which led to 53 deaths and over 700 injuries during protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

Prashant Kishor chooses “mute introspection” when Nitish takes the 10th chief ministerial oath in a lavish event

Patna, Nov 20: As the NDA celebrated its return to power in Patna, the Jan Suraj camp experienced a poignant silence. Nitish Kumar, president of JD(U), took the oath as Bihar’s chief minister for the tenth time at a grand ceremony attended by prominent leaders, including Prime Minister Modi, Amit Shah, and JP Nadda, creating a lively atmosphere at Gandhi Maidan.

In stark contrast, Prashant Kishor, founder of the recently established Jan Suraj Party (JSP), engaged in a day of silent reflection, or ‘maun vrat,’ at Bhitiharwa Gandhi Ashram, committing to atone for his party’s disappointing electoral performance. This ritualized penance followed



Kishor’s admission of a failure to effectively communicate his party’s vision to the electorate, acknowledging that he could not articulate compelling reasons for voters in

Bihar to support a new political system. Kishor had previously announced that he would observe this silent fast as a form of personal atonement for the election results

on November 20th.

Despite a proactive campaign addressing critical issues such as unemployment, migration, and industrial gaps, the JSP was unable to secure a single seat in the 243-member Assembly, contesting 238. Election Commission data indicated that most JSP candidates received less than 10% of the total votes, leading them to forfeit their deposits. In some areas, JSP candidates even garnered fewer votes than the None of the Above (NOTA) option. The party’s closest race occurred in Marhaura, where Naveen Kumar Singh, also known as Abhay Singh, achieved second place, with RJD’s Jitendra Kumar Rai winning by a significant margin of 27,928 votes.

22 students from Manipur's Churachandpur undertake National Integration Tour

Imphal, Nov 20: A group of 22 students and two teachers from Churachandpur, along with seven personnel from the Assam Rifles, is on a National Integration Tour (NIT) under Operation Sadbhavana, visiting cultural and historical sites in Delhi, Jaipur, and Kolkata. The tour, which commenced on November 15, aims to enrich the perspectives of youth from remote areas by introducing them to the nation's diversity. Having traveled through six states—Manipur, Mizoram, Assam, West Bengal, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh—the team arrived in New Delhi on November 19, marking a significant emotional milestone as it was many students' first encounter with the capital's iconic architecture and hustle. A pivotal moment occurred during their visit to Rashtrapati Bhawan, where they met President Droupadi Murmu, who engaged warmly with them. The students, ecstatic and appreciative of this opportunity, presented a souvenir and took a group photograph as a memento. On November 20, the group honored the memory of the martyrs from Churachandpur at the National War Memorial and visited India Gate, reflecting on the sacrifices of freedom fighters and preserving their experiences through various media. The tour is set to include a meeting with the Vice Chief of Army Staff before the team heads to Jaipur, serving as a transformative experience that builds national pride, unity, and a deeper appreciation for India's heritage.

NIA arrested 4 more prime accused in Red Fort blast case taking total to 6

New Delhi, Nov 20: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested four more prime accused involved in the November 10 blast outside the Red Fort in Delhi, taking the total number of arrests in the case to six.

The four accused were taken into custody by NIA in Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir, on production orders from the District Sessions Judge, Patiala House Court.

NIA has identified the accused as Dr Muzammil Shakeel Ganai of Pulwama (J&K), Dr Adeel Ahmed Rather of Anantnag (J&K), Dr Shaheen Saeed of Lucknow (U.P), and Mufti Irfan Ahmad Wagay of Shopian (J&K).

They had all played a key role in the terror attack that killed several innocent persons and left many others

injured, as per NIA investigations.

Moving expeditiously with its probe in the case, NIA had earlier arrested two other accused - Amir Rashid Ali, in whose name the car used in the blast was registered, and Jasir Bilal Wani @ Danish, who had provided technical aid to the terrorist involved in the deadly attack.

Their interrogation is continuing as part of NIA's efforts to unravel the complete terror conspiracy in the case RC-21/2025/ NIA/DLI. The anti-terror agency, which was handed over the investigation by the Union Home Ministry, Government of India, soon after the attack, is working closely with various state police forces to track and arrest every member of the terrorist module involved in the carnage.

Mizoram completes over 58% biometric enrolment for Myanmar refugees

Aizawl, Nov 20: Mizoram's ongoing effort to document thousands of displaced people from neighbouring Myanmar and Bangladesh has crossed a significant milestone, with officials completing 58.15 per cent of biometric enrolment for more than 31,000 Myanmar refugees currently living across all 11 districts.

The initiative, launched in July on the directive of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, aims to capture both biometric and biographic details through the Foreigners Identification Portal and Biometric Enrolment system. While the process marks one of the state's most extensive data-gathering exercises in recent years, authorities say it continues to be a logistical challenge.

The bulk of the Myanmar refugees—31,214 people—are from Chin state, where political turmoil and violence following the February 2021 military coup forced thousands to flee. Champhai district, which bor-

ders Myanmar, hosts the largest share.

Mizoram has also become a shelter for 2,354 refugees from Bangladesh's Chittagong Hill Tracts, most of them from the Bawm tribe, who arrived after a 2022 military offensive targeting an ethnic insurgent group. These asylum seekers are concentrated primarily in Lawngtlai district, with smaller groups in Lunglei and Thenzawl in Serchhip.

The state is simultaneously accommodating 6,953 internally displaced people from Manipur, adding to the scale and urgency of relief and registration efforts.

Although the biometric drive is progressing, officials admit that the ground situation is far from simple. Teams operating in far-flung villages are grappling with technical glitches, intermittent power supply, and patchy or non-existent internet connectivity, hampering the uploading of data.

"Collecting information from relief camps is relatively easy," a home de-

partment official said. "The real challenge lies in locating and registering those who are staying with relatives or in rented homes, often in remote pockets where connectivity is weak."

So far, only a little over 200 of the Bangladesh refugees have been successfully enrolled—reflecting the difficulties of reaching widely scattered communities.

Mizoram's empathetic approach to the displaced population is deeply rooted in shared ethnic histories. The Chins of Myanmar and the Bawm tribe of Bangladesh have long-standing cultural and kinship ties with the Mizo community, making their arrival not just a political issue but a humanitarian and familial one.

As officials continue the painstaking enrolment work, the state remains committed to balancing administrative requirements with a tradition of compassion—an approach that has defined Mizoram's response to regional crises for decades.

Tripura Performs First-Ever Advanced Cardiac Procedure, Marking Major Breakthrough in State Healthcare

Agartala, Nov 20: In a significant medical milestone for Tripura, doctors at Agartala Government Medical College and GB Pant Hospital have successfully conducted the state's first Percutaneous Transluminal Septal Myocardial Ablation (PT SMA) — a specialised, minimally invasive procedure used to treat Hypertrophic Obstructive Cardiomyopathy (HOCM), a life-threatening condition in which the heart muscle becomes abnormally thick and obstructs blood flow.

The procedure was per-

formed on a 46-year-old patient who had been suffering from severe chest pain for years. According to health officials, the patient is recovering steadily and has shown "remarkable improvement" following the intervention.

PT SMA involves injecting a precisely measured amount of alcohol into a targeted artery to shrink the thickened heart tissue that blocks blood flow. Doctors said the treatment is highly effective for eligible patients and directly addresses the obstructing cardiac muscle.

Medical experts noted that

HOCM, often genetic, frequently goes undiagnosed, increasing the risk of heart failure and sudden cardiac arrest. The introduction of PT SMA in Tripura is expected to offer new hope for patients who previously had to travel outside the state for treatment — a burden that strained both finances and access to timely care. The successful procedure positions the Agartala medical facility among a select few centres in eastern India capable of performing this advanced cardiac intervention. Hospital officials hailed the achievement as a

"turning point" for cardiac care in the region.

The operation was provided free of cost under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana. The medical team behind the breakthrough included: Dr. Anindya Sundar Trivedi, Assistant Professor, Consultant Cardiologist & HoD (In-Charge), Dr. Rakesh Das, Consultant Cardiologist, Dr. Manna Bhattacharya, Junior Doctor, Dr. Arghya Pratim Nath, Dr. Anvesha Debnath, Dr. Supratim Acharya, Dr. Bulti Namah Das, Dr. Angela Debbarma.

DA increased to 44% for Mizoram staff

Aizawl, Nov 20: The Mizoram government has approved a 4 per cent increase in dearness allowance (DA) for state government employees, raising the rate from 40 per cent to 44 per cent of basic pay with effect from November 1. The decision was finalised during a meeting of the Council of Ministers chaired by Chief Minister Lalduhoma, a senior official confirmed. Along with the latest revision, the cabinet has also cleared an additional 2 per cent hike that will come into effect from April 1 next year. With this, the DA for state employees will reach 46 per cent in April 2026. Officials pointed out that al-

though the increase will provide significant relief to government employees, the state still lags behind the central government, where employees currently receive around 53 per cent DA. The previous revision in Mizoram came in October 2023, when the allowance was raised from 36 per cent to 40 per cent. This fresh revision, officials said, is part of the government's efforts to ease the rising cost-of-living burden on its workforce. In another key decision, the Council of Ministers approved a special incentive allowance for police personnel in the assistant sub-inspector rank and below who are serving with the An-



ti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on deputation. The move is aimed at strengthening anti-corruption efforts and encouraging personnel posted in sensitive assignments. The Mizoram government hopes that the revised allowances will boost the morale of employees across departments while ensuring improved service delivery in the coming months.

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat arrives in Manipur for 3-day visit

Imphal, Nov 20: RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat arrived in Manipur on Thursday, November 20, marking his first visit to the state since ethnic violence broke out two years ago. His three-day trip is part of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's (RSS) centenary celebrations, and will include a series of closed-door meetings. According to RSS officials, Bhagwat's engagements during the visit will remain largely internal and connected to the organisation's centenary programmes. On Thursday, Bhagwat is scheduled to meet entrepreneurs and prominent citizens at Konjeng Leikai in Imphal. The following day, November 21, he will hold discussions with tribal leaders from the hill districts, focusing on community issues and concerns. Separate interactive sessions with youth leaders and influential citizens are also planned during the three-day visit. The meetings are expected to provide space for dialogue, though no public events or large gatherings have been announced.

Three Dead as Mini Truck Crashes Into Moving Train at Illegal Crossing in Tripura

Agartala, Nov 20: Three people were killed on Thursday when a mini truck collided with an express train at an unauthorised railway crossing in Tripura's Dhalai district, officials said.

According to Kapinjal Kishore Sharma, Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) of the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR), the incident occurred in the afternoon when the down Agartala-Silchar Express was passing through the hilly Ambasa-Manu section. A goods-laden mini truck suddenly entered the track and crashed into the engine of the moving train.

The impact killed the truck driver and two other occupants on the spot. Railway personnel later cleared the wreckage, allowing the train to resume its journey.

Sharma said the accident took place at an unauthorised crossing that railway authorities have repeatedly tried to shut down for public safety.

However, attempts to close the crossing—including a visit by Agartala-based railway officials on October 5—were met with resistance from local residents, preventing enforcement.

"The public is once again urged to avoid crossing railway tracks. Such unlawful movement is extremely dangerous and punishable under the Indian Railways Act," Sharma added.

Police identified the victims as Pramesh Debbarma (23), Bupendra Debbarma (55), and Bina Debbarma (27). Fire Service personnel recovered the bodies and sent them for post-mortem examination. Officials described the crash as one of Tripura's most serious recent railway track accidents.

The tragedy comes weeks after a near-disaster on October 5, when a Dharmanagar-Agartala DEMU train hit a mini truck loaded with brick chips near the same Ambasa-Manu section. In that incident, the truck's wheel got stuck on an unauthorised crossing, but no casualties were reported.

Authorities say both incidents highlight the grave risks posed by illegal and unregulated crossings, which continue to endanger lives despite repeated warnings.

Kokrajhar DC Masanda M Pertin convenes meet on special roll revision

Kokrajhar, Nov 20: In relation to the district's Special Revision of Electoral Roll, a meeting with the recognized national and state political parties in Kokrajhar district took place on Wednesday at the District Commissioner's office's Conference Hall. Masanda M. Pertin, the District Commissioner, presided over the meeting. He informed all of the delegates of the guidelines issued by the Election Commission of India and stressed the importance of strictly adhering to the deadlines. AROs, ADC Kabita Deka, Election Officer Keshabananda Taid, and other relevant officials attended the meeting as well. The District Commissioner highlighted during the meeting that the ongoing SR does not refer to Special Intensive Revision (SIR), but rather Special Revision with January 1, 2026 as the qualifying date. DC Pertin outlined the Special Revision schedule, starting with pre-revision activities from November 18 to 21, including document printing



and official training. LAC-wise training for BLOs and BLO Supervisors will occur on November 20 and 21 at Science College, Kokrajhar. This will be succeeded

by House-to-House verification, polling station rationalization, roll discrepancies removal, image quality improvement in EPICs, and parts recasting, scheduled

from November 22 to December 20. The Integrated Draft Electoral Roll will be published on December 27, with claims and objections accepted from December 27, 2025,

to January 22, 2026, including special campaigns on weekends. All claims will be resolved by February 2, 2026, with final verification and approval by February 6, 2026.

Municipal Corporation takes charge of Dibrugarh's 24×7 water scheme



Dibrugarh, Nov 20: A significant step toward guaranteeing safe and dependable drinking water throughout all 19 municipal wards was taken on Wednesday with the formal handover of the Dibrugarh Town 24×7 Water Supply Project under Atal Mission for Rejuvenation & Urban Transformation (AMRUT) 1.0 to the Dibrugarh Municipal Corporation.

The project, which cost ₹193 crore to build, has 7,676 resi-

dential connections and a vast distribution network spanning over 150 kilometers. According to officials, the new system will assist in resolving long-standing problems with inconsistent and dangerous water in numerous neighborhoods. A meeting with Municipal Corporation personnel was also held during the handover to go over their responsibilities and service-related issues. Senior officials from the Department

of Housing & Urban Affairs and the Cabinet Minister for Public Health Engineering attended the meeting. According to authorities, the initiative will significantly enhance inhabitants' everyday lives and help Dibrugarh meet its expanding needs in the years to come. The town's total civic services would be strengthened, relief will be provided, and hygiene will be improved with an unbroken water supply, they stated.

NE leaders push for schedule reforms, Bodo accord implementation

Guwahati, Nov 20: Leaders from the Northeast on Thursday appealed for action on Sixth Schedule reforms and implementation of the pending clauses of the Bodo Peace Accord 2020 before the Parliamentary winter session. A national seminar organised by the All-Bodo Students Union (ABSU) at the Constitution Club of India, New Delhi brought together tribal autonomous district councils, constitutional experts, parliamentarians and movement organisations from across the Northeast to place a joint appeal before the Union government ahead of the winter session of Parliament. ABSU president Dipen Boro, in his keynote address, said,

"This seminar brings together tribal councils, movement groups and community leaders who have walked through many phases of struggle to secure constitutional safeguards and political rights." "Some clauses of the Bodo Accord of 2020 are incomplete, such as council restructuring and land rights. Review meetings with senior officials have occurred, but progress must come through Parliament, specifically through amending Article 280 and the Sixth Schedule. The seminar emphasizes the unity of tribal councils in pursuing these constitutional demands. Concerns over the lack of visible results were expressed, and calls for meaningful amendments were voiced, highlighting a need for organized representation of tribal interests. The Bodo Accord is tied to a long history of aspirations for peace, which must be honored as a commitment. Additionally, Tripura's proposal for an improved Sixth Schedule arrangement remains pending despite previous discussions.



VA Tech gains 3% after winning a sizable order from the Nepal Water Supply Board

New Delhi: VA Tech Wabag (VA Tech) shares were buzzing on Thursday, November 20, 2025, with the stock rising up to 3.36 per cent to hit an intraday high of ₹1,449.35 per share. At 9:30 AM, VA Tech share price continued to trade higher, up 1.99 per cent at ₹1,430. In comparison, BSE Sensex was trading 0.20 per cent higher at 85,355.60 levels. Shares of VA Tech Wabag gained in Thursday's trade after the company announced that it had won a large repeat order from Nepal's Melamchi Water Supply Development Board (MWSDB). The contract, funded by the Asian Development Bank, involves the design, construction and operation of a 255-MLSundarijal Water Treatment Plant in the



Kathmandu Valley. A 'Large' order means an order value in the range of \$30 million to \$75 million, the company said. The engineering and construction phase will be executed over 36 months, followed by five years of operations and maintenance, reinforcing Wabag's lifecycle-based project capabilities.

The plant will be built next to the existing Melamchi facility, which Wabag commissioned in 2017, and will treat water from the Melamchi, Yangri and Larke rivers to meet Nepal's national drinking-water standards. "We sincerely thank MWSDB for this repeat order, which is a testament to the con-

tinued confidence of our valued customer in our technical proficiency and capabilities," stated Arvind Dullu, regional business head for South and South-east Asia. This significant order strengthens WABAG's position as an industry leader throughout South Asia and solidifies our strategic presence in Nepal.

Infosys share buyback opens: Eligibility, tax impact & analyst

New Delhi: Infosys Ltd's Rs 18,000 crore share buyback opened for subscription on Thursday (November 20) and will remain open until November 26. The company had set November 14 as the record date to determine eligible shareholders. The IT major plans to repurchase 10 crore fully paid-up equity shares of face value Rs 5 each, representing up to 2.41 per cent of its total paid-up equity share capital, reserved category for small shareholders and a general category. A small shareholder is one holding shares worth not more than Rs 2,00,000 as on the record date. Infosys has 25,85,684 small shareholders. The reserved portion will be 15 per cent of the shares proposed to be bought back, or the entitlement of small



shareholders, whichever is higher. Promoters and the promoter group, including Nandan M Nilekani and Sudha Murty, will not participate in the buyback. They collectively held a 13.05 per cent stake in the company on the buyback announcement date. Buyback proceeds are now classified as "income from oth-

ersources" and taxed at the investor's applicable income-tax (I-T) slab rate, rather than under capital gains. The entire amount received in the buyback is taxable. Earlier, companies paid a 20 per cent buyback tax and the income was exempt for shareholders, but this provision has been withdrawn.

India-US inching closer to trade package on reciprocal tariffs

Mumbai: India and the US are inching closer towards a trade deal and Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal on Monday said that the two countries are working on a package to address reciprocal tariffs which is near closure. "The first tranche of the bilateral trade deal will address the reciprocal tariffs," he told reporters on Monday, adding that it would happen sooner than later, but declined to provide a deadline for it. The trade deal would have two parts, including the more immediate package on reciprocal tariffs, while the second would be the overall trade agreement. Sources further said that the trade deal on reciprocal tariffs would address the full 50% tariffs on India by the US, including the 25% penal tariffs for purchase of Russian crude oil. For the US, it would address market access for goods, they further elaborated. India and the US have been engaged on the

BTA over the last few months and officials indicated that further rounds of negotiations may not be needed. A team led by Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal visited the US last month to take forward the stalled negotiations. Meanwhile, India's merchandise exports to the US declined in October 2025 to \$6.31 billion from \$5.47 billion in September 2025 and \$6.9 billion in October 2024. Cumulative merchandise exports to the US stood at \$52.12 billion between April and October, rising by 10.15% from \$47.32 billion a year ago. "India's exports to the US have held ground and overall exports remains in the positive domain but has fallen in the month of October while pointing out that it was higher than September 2025 levels. Major sectors driving export growth to the drugs and pharmaceuticals, chemicals and textiles.

RIL shares approach record high, market cap almost hits Rs 21 lakh crore mark

New Delhi: Shares of Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) rose over 2% on Thursday after Swiss investment bank UBS maintained its 'Buy' rating on the market heavyweight. It has a target price of Rs 1,820 per share on the Mukesh Ambani-led conglomerate. RIL shares rose 2.42% to a high of Rs 1550.90 today. Market cap of the firm almost touched the Rs 21 lakh crore mark. It rose to Rs 20.98 lakh crore. RIL stock has gained 25% in a year and risen 32% in two years. The stock has a beta of 1.2, indicating high volatility in a year. The stock fell to a 52-week low of Rs 1115.55 on April 7, 2025 and reached a record high of

Rs 1551 on July 9 this year. In terms of technicals, the relative strength index (RSI) of RIL stock stands at 68.9, signaling it's trading near the overbought zone, reflecting the actual profitability of diesel-heavy refiners such as Reliance, said UBS adding that the firm's diversified crude sourcing strategy helps cushion the impact of geopolitical volatility on margins. EBITDA for the oil to chemical business (O2C) is likely to rise from Rs 29,500 crore in the first half of FY26 to Rs 34,000 crore in the second half, and further rise to Rs 64,800 crore in FY27, said the brokerage. In Q2 of the current fiscal, RIL reported a 9.67



per cent year-on-year (YoY) rise in consolidated net profit for Q2 FY26. Profit attributable to shareholders stood at Rs 18,165 crore in Q2 against Rs 16,563 crore in

the year-ago quarter. Revenue from operations climbed 9.94 per cent to Rs 2,58,898 crore during the quarter, compared with Rs 2,35,481 crore in Q2 FY25.

Sensex falls 278 points, Nifty slips below 26,000 as global weakness triggers profit-taking

New Delhi: Snapping the six-day winning streak, benchmark Sensex dropped by nearly 278 points and the Nifty closed below the 26,000-mark due to profit-taking in IT, metal and capital goods shares amid a weak trend in global markets. The 30-share BSE Sensex declined by 277.93 points or 0.33 per cent to settle at 84,673.02. During the day, it dropped 392.59 points or 0.46 per cent to 84,558.36. The 50-share NSE Nifty dipped 103.40 points or 0.40 per cent to 25,910.05. Among Sensex firms, Tech Mahindra, Infosys, Bajaj Finance, Bajaj Finserv, Eternal, Adani Ports, Hindustan Unilever and Bharat Electronics were the major laggards. However, Bharti Airtel, Axis Bank, Asian Paints and Titan were among the gainers. "The domestic equity market edged lower as investors booked profits after the recent rebound, mirroring weak global sentiment. Expectations of a US Fed rate cut in December have diminished, weighing on sentiment, with IT, metal, and realty stocks declining amid a stronger dollar," Vinod Nair, Head of

Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said. The BSE smallcap gauge dropped 0.85 per cent and midcap index declined 0.70 per cent. Among sectoral indices, realty tanked 1.98 per cent, followed by BSE Focused IT (1.16 per cent), IT (1.15 per cent), metal (1.07 per cent), commodities (0.95 per cent) and industrials (0.93 per cent). Consumer Durables index emerged as the only gainer. A total of 2,740 stocks declined while 1,463 advanced and 138 remained unchanged on the BSE. In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi, Japan's Nikkei 225 index, Shanghai's SSE Composite index, and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index settled sharply lower. "A sharp sell-off in global equities, driven by concerns over stretched valuations in the technology sector, sparked broad-based profit booking on the domestic bourses as well. However, Indian markets managed to limit their losses, especially when compared with over 3 per cent declines witnessed in Japan's Nikkei and South Korea's Kospi. "The relatively resilient performance highlights the



strong buying support from domestic institutional investors at lower levels, which helped cushion the downside," Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said. European markets were trading in the red. US markets ended in negative territory on Monday. Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Tuesday said, "You

will hear good news" on the proposed trade pact between India and the US once the deal is fair, equitable and balanced. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 442.17 crore on Monday, according to exchange data. Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) also bought stocks worth Rs 1,465.86 crore in the previous trade.

Mahindra Finance reaches a new high after rising 10% in just four days

Mumbai: In intraday trading on the BSE on Thursday, shares of M&M Financial Services (M&M Finance) reached a record high of ₹339.65, up 3% due to steady asset quality and a positive business outlook. For the fourth consecutive trading day, the Mahindra Group non-banking financial company (NBFC) saw a 10% increase in its stock price. It has surpassed the market by 32% over the last six months, while the BSE Sensex has increased by 5%. For the quarter ending September 30, 2025 (Q2FY26), Mahindra Finance reported a 54% year-over-year (YoY) increase in profit after tax (PAT). The company's loan book increased by 13% year over year, while disbursements increased by 3%. With GS3 at 3.9% and GS2+GS3 at 9.7%, the company's asset quality stayed within the recommended range. According to the management, demand and asset quality will sustainably improve during the second half (October to March) of the fiscal year 2025–2026 (H2FY26F). Even though Q1 was quiet, there has undoubtedly been improvement in the second half of Q2 and beyond following the GST announcements. It is anticipated that the favorable trend and the holiday demand, which the management believes has been adequately met, will continue into Q3 and a portion of Q4. According to analysts at In-Cred Equities, Mahindra Finance is now going through a cyclical downturn and recalibrating



its strategy with an emphasis on simplifying the asset quality. Despite Mahindra Finance's favorable valuation and slightly higher target price of ₹380 (formerly ₹360), the brokerage company continues to maintain its "ADD" recommendation. Analysts at Motilal Oswal Financial Services claim that Mahindra Finance recorded an operationally mixed quarter that was characterized by sluggish loan growth and disbursements, mostly due to postponed auto sales between mid-August and mid-September despite anticipation of a GST rate cut. Elevated credit costs, increased slippages, and persistently higher levels of write-offs were indicative of a little seasonal decline in asset quality. Positively, the brokerage firm reported that NIM increased QoQ by about 12 basis points due to lower leverage and lower cost of capital following the completion of the rights issuance. With a target price of ₹350 (based on 1.7x Sep'27E BV), it reaffirmed its "BUY" recommendation.

Renewable energy bids see sharp in FY26: ICRA

New Delhi: The bidding for new renewable energy (RE) projects in the country fell sharply, with only 5.8 GW awarded in eight months of FY2026, against the required target of 45-50 GW for the year, owing to concerns about the execution related to available transmission connectivity for the RE sector. The unsigned power purchase agreements (PPAs) capacity remains sizeable at about 40-45 GW as of date, based on industry channel check, according to the rating agency ICRA's analysis. To achieve the target of 500 GW of non-fossil fuel energy by 2030, India needs to add 45-50 GW annually. "The decline in new project bids and delays in signing PPAs for large RE capacity by Central nodal agencies clearly reflects the concerns on the execution



related to available transmission connectivity for the RE sector," said Girishkumar Kadam, Senior Vice President & Group Head - Corporate Ratings, ICRA. He said that reported grid curtailments including large hydro, is expected to cross 35% by FY2030 from 22.1% in FY2025, with expected incremental capacity addition of 200 GW between FY2025 and FY2030. This, in turn, also hinges on the extent of implementation of

the ongoing project pipeline, where the projects are bid out and the PPAs are signed, the development of adequate transmission connectivity infrastructure, as well as timely bidding for new RE projects, along with PPAs signing by Central nodal agencies. As India grapples with variability in renewable generation, Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) have emerged as an important enabler for grid stability.

Nuvama retains 'Buy' on Waaree Energies; highlights strong momentum at Premier

Mumbai: Nuvama Institutional Equities has reaffirmed its 'Buy' rating on Waaree Energies Ltd after the company reported a record performance in the September quarter (Q2) of FY26. Waaree's revenue, EBITDA and PAT rose 70 per cent, 1.7 times and 1.3 times year-on-year (YoY), respectively, in Q2 FY26.

The domestic brokerage noted that EBITDA margin expanded sharply by 850 basis points (bps) YoY to 23 per cent, aided by a 24 per cent improvement in module realisation and a 3 per cent reduction in raw ma-

terial cost. The company also recorded its highest-ever module output of 2.6 GW, marking a 42 per cent YoY and 15 per cent sequential increase. Premier Energies Ltd also posted a strong set of numbers, with revenue, EBITDA and PAT rising 20 per cent, 47 per cent and 72 per cent YoY, respectively. Premier's EBITDA margin stood at 31 per cent, up 562 bps YoY. Cell utilisation was at 79 per cent, lower than 94 per cent in the previous quarter due to the ongoing ramp-up of a new 1.2 GW cell line, while module utilisation also stood at 79 per cent.

8th Pay Commission: PM to amend 8th CPC ToR

New Delhi: The Confederation of Central Government Employees & Workers has urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to amend the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the newly constituted 8th Central Pay Commission (CPC), arguing that crucial concerns of nearly 69 lakh pensioners and family pensioners have been overlooked. In a detailed letter sent on Monday, the Confederation welcomed the formation of the Commission but said the current ToR lacks clarity on several key issues, particularly pension revision, pension parity and the future of various pension schemes. One of the major objections raised is the absence of a specified implementation date. The Confederation insisted that the 8th CPC must come into effect from January 1, 2026, consistent with the 10-year cycle followed by

earlier pay commissions. It also criticised the use of the phrase "unfunded cost of non-contributory pension schemes" in the ToR, calling it inappropriate and insensitive. Citing landmark Supreme Court judgments such as Deokinandan Prasad, D.S. Nakara and Vijay Kumar v. Central Bank of India, it emphasised that pension is a constitutional right under Article 300A and a core element of socio-economic justice—not a fiscal burden to be categorised alongside government liabilities. The Confederation demanded a clear directive empowering the 8th CPC to examine pension structures comprehensively. This includes revising pensions, ensuring parity irrespective of retirement date, restoring commutation after 11 years, introducing additional pension every five years for senior citizens, improv-

ing CGHS access, and restructuring the CGEGIS. It reiterated its long-standing call for the restoration of the Old Pension Scheme (OPS), arguing that 26 lakh employees who joined service after April 1, 2004, remain deeply dissatisfied with the NPS and the newer Unified Pension Scheme (UPS). The 8th CPC, it said, must evaluate all schemes and recommend the most beneficial option. The Confederation also sought inclusion of employees of autonomous institutions, statutory bodies and Gramin Dak Sevaks under the 8th CPC's scope, describing them as integral to government service delivery. Citing rising inflation and delays in the pay commission process, it requested 20% interim relief to safeguard the morale of nearly 1.2 crore serving employees, pensioners and family pensioners.

Sunita Ahuja: “Love to death,” but cheating caused deepest pain

Mumbai: Govinda’s wife Sunita Ahuja may not be an actor, but in the world of celebrity conversations, she’s quickly becoming a star. Her unfiltered humour, sharp one-liners and lively personality have turned her YouTube vlogs into a guilty pleasure for thousands. And now, her candid take on the internet’s newest relationship debate — emotional cheating vs physical cheating — has gone viral.

In a chat with Pinkvilla, Sunita didn’t hesitate when asked which betrayal cuts deeper — emotional or physical. She chose emotional cheating without a second thought. She said, “Emotional. Aap emotionally ek insaan ko pyaar karte ho phir baad mein aap usko cheat karte ho. That’s not right. Kyunki dekhniye main bahot emotional hu. I love Govinda to my death. I’ll tell you. Emotionally mujhe koi bhi dhokha de, chahe mere bacche ho, mera pati ho, I get very hurt. Emotionally kisi ko mat karo, it’s not good year.” When asked whether physical cheating is any less serious, Sunita refused the idea instantly. She said, “Woh bhi nahi karna chahiye! Yeh dono hi kyun karna hai aapko? It’s not right. Mere ko lagta hai yeh sab cheez achha nahi hai yaar. Humaare maa baap ne aisa sanskaar nahi diya.” Calling today’s normalisation of cheating “ghor kalyug,” Sunita said the shift in social attitudes is worrying to her.

The conversation around emotional vs physical cheating has resurfaced thanks to

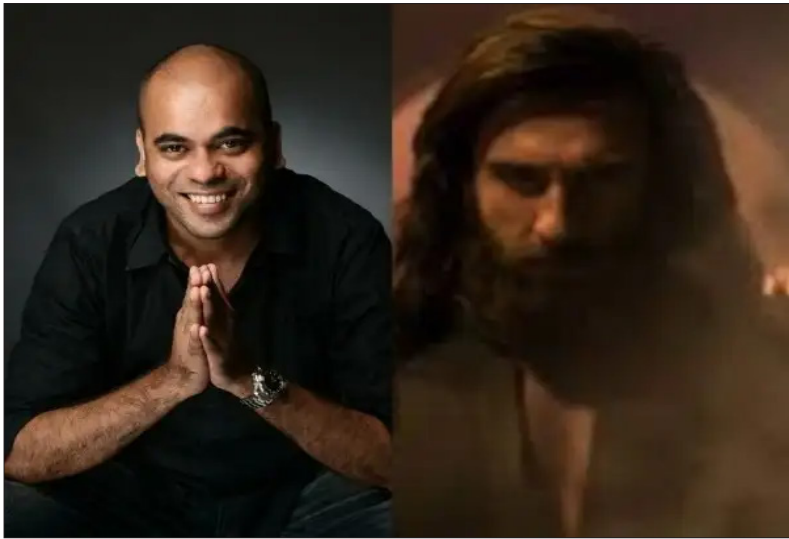


Twinkle Khanna and Kajol’s chat show Two Much with Kajol and Twinkle. During a yes-or-no segment, both the hosts — along with Karan Johar — said emotional cheating hurts more. Janhvi Kapoor disagreed and said both are equally bad. Govinda and Sunita married in 1987, kept it secret until their daughter Tina was born in 1989, and have stayed a strong unit for decades—but the rumours clearly aren’t ready to take a break. Govinda and Sunita Ahuja have been one of Bollywood’s favourite love stories for decades, but recent chatter around their marriage has kept them in the headlines more than ever. In previous interviews, Sunita has acknowledged the challenges of being a “hero’s wife,” stating that one must develop a “heart of stone” to navigate the uncertainties and public life that come with being married to a superstar. Despite the turbulence, she has always affirmed her lifelong commitment, once famously quoting her mother’s words on her wedding day: “Your funeral procession should leave from there,” symbolizing the seriousness of the commitment she made.

Suparn Varma Defends ‘Dhurandhar,’ Cites Applause for Foreign Film Violence

Mumbai: After the success of Haq, a film starring Yami Gautam and Emraan Hashmi that has been praised for its emotional truth and story, director Suparn S Varma has now shared his thoughts on an eagerly awaited new project. While Haq continues to resonate with audiences in cinemas, Suparn has also offered his support to fellow filmmaker Aditya Dhar, who has recently received some online criticism for the violent nature of his film, Dhurandhar.

Suparn Varma talked about how Indian films are frequently judged more harshly compared to similar international films. As Aditya Dhar’s film prepares for its theatrical release, he talked about there should be an end to this bias. He said that the film’s success shows that when our own storytellers are supported with the same confidence shown to global cinema, they are capable of producing work that is comparable to the finest in the world. He wrote on his social media handle, “I’m just amazed by some of the chatter about the violence in #Dhurandhar the same viewers would have called it cinematic brilliance if this was in any other language or a Korean or Japanese film. It’s high time we started to celebrate Hindi cinema and its filmmakers with the same passion we celebrate all makers and films. Each filmmaker comes with his/her unique voice



and identity and background & I have been left spellbound by the world and characters created by @adityadharfilms and his amazing team.” Meanwhile, the buzz around Ranveer Singh’s Dhurandhar trailer took an unexpected turn this week. What initially generated excitement soon led to a debate, as a classic Madhubala qawwali led to conversations about originality. Amidst this, filmmaker Sujoy Ghosh also offered his support for the film. The Dhurandhar trailer had also created a buzz online, especially due to the iconic Na Toh Karvan Ki Talaash Hai in its concluding moments.

This instantly drew reactions, including a comment from a user who expressed the view that Bollywood frequently re-uses older songs. The comment read, “That song at the end of #Dhurandhar is not original but a version of Manna Dey’s song word by word... in terms of music, Bollywood has zero originality to offer.” Sujoy responded immediately, denying that the team had presented the track as new. He replied to the user, clarifying the situation, “No one claimed its original. In fact if anything... its good that they got a song from barsaat ki raat out there.”

Oberoi: SRK forgotten by 2050



Mumbai: Vivek Oberoi has stirred debate with his latest comments on the fleeting nature of fame, suggesting that even someone as iconic as Shah Rukh Khan may not be remembered by future generations. Speaking to Pinkvilla, the actor reflected on how stardom inevitably diminishes. Vivek Oberoi has stirred debate with his latest comments on the fleeting nature of fame, suggesting that even someone as iconic as Shah Rukh Khan may not be remembered by future generations. Speaking to Pinkvilla, the actor reflected on how stardom inevitably diminishes.

Vivek supported his argument by referencing Raj Kapoor, considered a god-like figure in Indian cinema. He suggested that even Kapoor’s legacy does not resonate with the younger generation. “Like people today might ask, ‘Who is Raj Kapoor?’ You and I, we call him the god of cinema but if you ask any youngster who is a fan of Ranbir Kapoor, they might not even know who Raj Kapoor was. So maybe history relegates you into nothingness,” he said. Despite Vivek’s provocative statement, Shah Rukh Khan remains one of the biggest superstars of the last several decades. In 2023, the actor delivered three blockbusters — Pathaan, Jawan and Dunki — which collectively earned over ₹2,600 crore worldwide. SRK’s next film, King, directed by Siddharth Anand, released its teaser on the actor’s 60th birthday. The film features Suhana Khan, Deepika Padukone, Rani Mukerji, Raghav Juyal, Arshad Warsi and Abhishek Bachchan among others. Shah Rukh also made a cameo appearance in his son Aryan Khan’s Netflix debut series The Ba*ds of Bollywood, where he played a fictionalised version of himself. The series, produced by Red Chillies Entertainment, includes appearances by SS Rajamouli, Karan Johar, Aamir Khan, Salman Khan, Ranveer Singh and others. Vivek Oberoi’s remarks have reignited conversations about legacy, cultural memory and the shelf life of stardom. Whether the world will truly “forget” Shah Rukh Khan remains a matter of speculation, but for now, his imprint on Indian cinema is unmatched and unshakable.

Sunny Deol, Akshaye Khanna to Star in New Action Thriller

Mumbai: In a major casting coup for action lovers, Sunny Deol and Akshaye Khanna have come together for an upcoming action thriller that also stars Sanjeeda Shaikh in a pivotal role. According to our source, the project, currently untitled, has officially gone on floors, with shooting underway in Mumbai.

A source close to the development has stated, “Sunny Deol and Akshaye Khanna are coming together

for an action thriller, exclusively for OTT. The shooting prep has started in Mumbai.” The collaboration marks a powerful pairing of two of Bollywood’s most iconic actors. While details about the plot are being kept tightly under wraps, the film is said to feature intense action sequences, high drama and a fast-paced narrative tailored for digital audiences. Sanjeeda Shaikh, known for her versatile performances across



film and web series, is set to bring an important layer

of depth to the storyline. Our source has also confirmed that the film is being designed exclusively for an OTT platform, though the streaming partner is yet to be officially announced. Production insiders reveal that the decision to opt for a digital release stems from the growing demand for large-scale action content on streaming services. With shooting currently progressing in Mumbai, more updates, including

the title, release window and additional cast, are expected later. Stay tuned for further developments on this much-anticipated project. Siddharth P Malhotra is going to direct this thriller with Sunny and Akshaye in the leads.

On the professional front, Sunny Deol’s last release was JAAT. He is also scheduled to star in Border 2, alongside Varun Dhawan, Diljit Dosanjh and more. Akshaye Khanna, on the

other hand, starred in Chhaava with Vicky Kaushal and Rashmika Mandanna. Sanjeeda Shaikh was last seen in Heermandi and Fighter. The film is scheduled to go on floors shortly, with a projected premiere on Netflix sometime in 2026. Industry experts believe this combination of star power, a proven director, and a high-stakes action genre will be a major driver for the streaming platform in the coming year.

Pankaj Tripathi Makes Production Debut with ‘Perfect Family’; Trailer Released

Mumbai: Modern societies have become more open about therapy and counselling. But do every individual feels the same? When things come from their own families or themselves, people tend to respond differently. This is what the upcoming movie Perfect Family, starring Neha Dhupia, Manoj Pahwa, Seema Pahwa, Gulshan Devaiah, and others, is all about.

As the makers released the trailer for Perfect Family – Therapy Ka Safar, it turned out to be an alarming call to the nation, highlighting emotional stress, tension, and more. The 2-minute 48-second video explores the themes of taking therapies shown in the film, presented by Pankaj Tripathi. The video was shared on the official YouTube channel of Jar Series and has already garnered 7,037 views. The film, sched-



uled for release on November 27, on the Jar Series YouTube Channel, is about the Perfect Family – the lovable Karkarias. The synopsis alongside the trailer read, “Perfect on the outside, but simmering with resentments, insecurities, and old wounds on the inside. When life hits hard, they’re pushed into family therapy, where issues of trust, loyalty, and communication finally explode.” The note continued, “With their quirks, chaos, and constant derailing

when the school arranges a family counselling session with Neha Dhupia, leading to a series of revelations and realisations. Reacting to the trailer, a user said, “Can’t wait! We love it.” Another mentioned, “Jar series is one of the best platforms which is serving such good kind of content. The last time I watched the show, it was very short, but it touched my heart.” Many others have liked the video on YouTube, showing their admiration for the same. The Sachin Pathak directorial stars Neha Dhupia, Manoj Pahwa, Seema Pahwa, Gulshan Devaiah, Girija Oak Godbole, Kaveri Seth, Hirva Trivedi, Ronav Vaswani and others. It marks Pankaj Tripathi’s debut production alongside Ajay G Rai, Mohit Chhabra, Munish Sahni, Sana Warsi, Mukesh Chhabra, and Sunny Raj.

of every session, progress is a miracle. Join them on this hilarious, heartfelt Therapy ka Safar—where life finally meets itself.” The trailer begins with a family of six planning a Bollywood-themed birthday party for the youngest member, a school-going girl. But after the party is over, the family indulges in a heated argument, leading to the girl collapsing and being later diagnosed with HSP (Highly Sensitive Person). This is

12-Year Break Ends: Actor Returns to Bollywood Just for Aamir Khan

Mumbai: Film actor Vipin Sharma, celebrated for his nuanced performances in Taare Zameen Par and Gangs of Wasseypur, recently opened up about his prolonged absence from Bollywood and the unexpected path that led to his comeback. In a candid conversation with IANS, the actor reflected on the 12-year gap that kept him away from the film sets and how returning to the industry felt like “starting all over again.”

Sharma revealed that after his early work in cinema, he consciously stepped away from acting and spent over a decade abroad, where he rebuilt his creative life as an editor. But it was Taare Zameen Par, his first project upon returning, that marked a turning point. Recalling it, he said, “The first break is always special. You feel



that your journey has restarted. The first assignment remains unforgettable.” Currently, Sharma is riding high on the success of Maharani Season 4, the political drama that premiered on Sony LIV on November 7, with Huma Qureshi in the lead. He credits producer Subhash Kapoor for bringing him on board, saying, “We had been in touch for almost fifteen years. We used to speak often and occasionally meet. I had a

strong desire to work with him, and our friendship was very strong. When I met him and discussed this role, I didn’t need to think twice.” Speaking about his craft, Sharma offered insight into how he approaches complex and negative characters, saying that he never overthinks it. For him, the profession of the character, be it a doctor, lawyer, or politician, doesn’t matter. He tries to understand the human underneath.

Manoj Bajpayee on ‘The Family Man 3’: Never Easy, Always Nervous

Mumbai: India’s most-loved spy thriller series, The Family Man, is all set to return with its third season. After years of anticipation, Manoj Bajpayee returns as the fan-favourite Srikant Tiwari and this time, he’s not just fighting enemies, he’s fighting for survival. In a recent chat with Hindustan Times, Manoj opened up about reprising his role, stating that it doesn’t mean that he doesn’t get stressed anymore.

Manoj Bajpayee explained, “I am not one to take my work for granted. I can’t achieve without working a bit too hard. I am a very nervous person, and I pass on my nerves to my directors. I never think it’s easy; that is the problem. I am panicking all the time. I am nervous all the time.” Director Raj Nidimoru, who was also a part of the conversation, said, “I caught on to this much later... Because he wouldn’t let this nervousness show. On set, he would crack jokes and be normal. But in his head, he would keep thinking and stressing. I realised it much later.” Manoj mentioned that for every



season of The Family Man, he has sat down with the creators for 20 minutes and understood the beats of his character. “In the initial stages, it is a lot of struggle,” he said. Manoj said that this is the case with all his projects.

This time, Srikant’s mission moves eastward, into unfamiliar terrain and dangerous new territory. Season 3 brings a monumental clash of talent, featuring a high-octane face-off that is already send-

ing fan anticipation soaring- the clash between Manoj Bajpayee’s Srikant and Jaideep Ahlawat’s Rukma. Jaideep Ahlawat’s antagonist, Rukma, is designed as a dark reflection of our beloved TASC agent. His character presents a threat that is deeply personal and ideologically opposite to Srikant, pushing him to his absolute limit. The Family Man Season 3 streams globally on Prime Video from November 21.

Ishaan Khatter & Vishal Jethwa’s Oscar Contender, ‘Homebound,’ Gets OTT Release Date

Mumbai: Homebound, India’s official selection for the 98th Academy Awards, is all set to reach a global audience as the critically acclaimed film prepares for its digital premiere. Led by Ishaan Khatter, Vishal Jethwa, and Janhvi Kapoor, the film earned widespread appreciation during its theatrical run for its affecting portrayal of friendship, ambition, and the struggles of young Indians navigating societal expectations. Now, viewers worldwide will finally be able to stream the film from the comfort of their homes. Netflix announced that Neeraj Ghaywan’s Homebound will begin streaming on the platform starting November 21. The streamer shared the update along with the film’s poster on Instagram, writing, “A long road home. A friend who feels



like home. Two childhood friends take their shot at living a life of dignity, but there’s a long battle to be won. India’s Official Selection for Best International Feature Film at the 98th Oscars, Homebound, is out 21 November on Netflix.” The film is backed by heavyweight producers including Karan Johar, Adar Poonawalla, Apoorva Mehra, and Somen Mishra, with Marijke deSouza and Melita Toscan Du Plantier joining as

co-producers. It also enjoys a strong international imprint, with Martin Scorsese and Pravin Khairnar serving as executive producers. Directed by Neeraj Ghaywan, Homebound blends authentic Indian storytelling with a contemporary global cinematic vision. The narrative revolves around Shoaib (Ishaan Khatter) and Chandan (Vishal Jethwa), two childhood friends whose dream of joining the police force becomes the foundation

of their lives. Janhvi Kapoor plays a pivotal role, adding emotional depth to a storyline that explores themes of duty, identity, hope, and the social pressures that shape the youth of modern India. Speaking about the film’s journey, Ghaywan said, “Inspired by a true story of friendship, Homebound explores the universal themes of connection and compassion as forms of quiet resistance. After screening in competition at some of the world’s most prestigious festivals and loved by everyone, it has now found a home on Netflix, reaching audiences in 190 countries.” Producer Karan Johar also praised the film’s emotional power, calling it “the kind of film that reminds us why stories matter—intimate, layered, and guided with great care by Neeraj.”

Why cardiologists are calling Lipoprotein(a) the next big heart health marker

Do you know about Lipoprotein(a)?

When it comes to heart health, most of us already know the drill: keep an eye on cholesterol, watch your blood pressure, and maybe get your blood sugar checked. But there’s a new player that cardiologists are buzzing about: Lipoprotein(a), or Lp(a) for short. If you’ve never heard of it, you’re not alone. For years, Lp(a) flew under the radar, even though researchers have known about it for decades. Now, more doctors in the US, UK, Canada and other places where heart disease is a major health concern, are saying it could be one of the most important heart health markers of our time

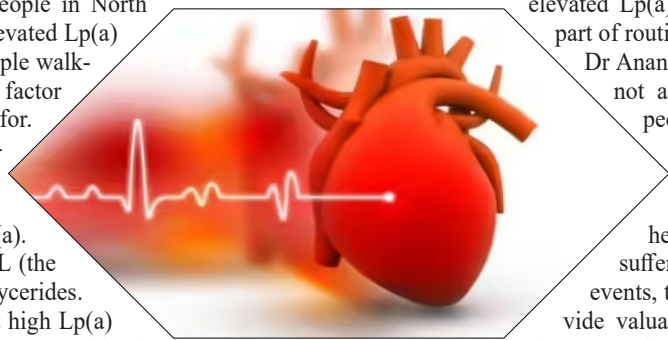
So, what exactly is Lipoprotein(a)?

Think of Lp(a) as cholesterol’s sneaky cousin. It’s a type of lipoprotein, basically a particle that carries cholesterol and fats through your blood. The “(a)” part is a sticky little protein that makes it more dangerous than regular LDL (the so-called “bad” cholesterol). Why dangerous? Because Lp(a) doesn’t just float around, it clings to artery walls and fuels plaque buildup. Over time, this can make your arteries narrow and stiff, setting the stage for heart disease, strokes, and other cardiovascular problems. In fact, about 20–25% of people in North America and Europe have elevated Lp(a) levels. That’s millions of people walking around with a hidden risk factor they’ve never been tested for.

Why cardiologists are suddenly talking about it

For years, most doctors didn’t routinely test for Lp(a). The focus was on LDL, HDL (the “good” cholesterol), and triglycerides. But new research shows that high Lp(a) levels can independently raise your risk of heart attack and stroke, even if all your other numbers look fine. That means someone with “normal” cholesterol might still be at risk, and they’d never know it unless they got tested for Lp(a). No wonder cardiologists are calling it the “next big marker” in heart health. We are paying more attention to Lipoprotein(a), our next major marker in our ability to care for the heart

Dr. Gajinder Kumar Goyal, Program Clinical Director - Cardiology, Marengo Asia Hospitals Faridabad, we are paying more attention to Lipoprotein(a), our next major marker in our ability to care for the heart. Unlike LDL, cholesterol which most people are aware of, Lp(a) is a genetic form of cholesterol that is mainly not impacted by our lifestyle or diet. Lp(a) is carried within us in blood and can cause plaque formation in the arteries, which increases the likelihood of heart attack, stroke, and aortic valve disease. What is especially problematic in relation to Lp(a), is that - in many cases of elevated Lp(a) people are otherwise healthy with normal cholesterol readings but they still have unknown heart disease risk factors associated with cardiovascular risks. Research indicates that a maximum of approximately 20-25% of the overall population may have elevated Lp(a) levels. There are no specific medications currently widely approved to treat it. There are some promising medications in development. For now, we emphasize the importance of testing, and testing for Lp(a) is not routinely done in the regular check-ups we go through. A simple blood test can determine your Lp(a) levels, allowing you to determine some individuals at risk for it, sooner. With increasing rates of heart disease, Lp(a) could potentially take its place as an important marker for cardiovascular risk, and by recognizing and treating it early, we will be able to prevent heart disease cases with individuals that would



otherwise fall through the cracks of standard cholesterol testing.

“Lp(a) behaves differently from traditional cholesterol”

Dr. Anand Kumar Pandey, Senior Director - Cardiology, Max Super Speciality Hospital, Vaishali says, in relation to cardiovascular health Lp(a), is gaining traction as a next-generation biomarker, and many cardiologists want people to focus on it. Lp(a) has a structure that is similar to that of LDL or bad cholesterol but it has one extra protein, apolipoprotein(a), that we believe is responsible for its more deleterious effects on arteries. Lp(a) behaves differently from traditional cholesterol because its levels are largely determined by genetics and remain relatively stable throughout life. In other words, lifestyle changes such as dietary modification and exercise do little to change Lp(a) levels. Elevated Lp(a) levels are associated with an increased risk of heart attacks, and strokes and aortic valve narrowing, even among individuals who have normal cholesterol and blood pressure levels. As such, while Lp(a) is a critical, underappreciated cardiovascular risk factor, few health care professionals routinely measure it. “Roughly one in three individuals may have elevated Lp(a)” Roughly one in three individuals may have elevated Lp(a), yet it is currently not part of routine cholesterol screening.

Dr Anand adds. Because Lp(a) is not assessed routinely, many people may be unaware of their elevated Lp(a).

For those with a family history of premature heart disease or who have suffered unexplained cardiac events, testing for Lp(a) can provide valuable information. At this time, no validated therapies to directly lower Lp(a) exist, but clinical trials are currently investigating advanced modalities such as antisense drugs and siRNA therapies. Statins, while extensively used as the clinical gold standard to lower LDL, have little-to-no impact on lowering Lp(a). Because it has the potential to explain “hidden risk” in patients, and with its relationship to heart disease as a likely explaining factor, cardiologists have been vocal about the need for more routine testing and research into Lp(a), keeping it a promising and exciting new frontier in the prevention and management of heart disease.

Can you get tested for Lp(a)?

Yes, and the good news is it’s a simple blood test. The bad news? Not all doctors automatically include it in standard checkups. Some experts recommend that everyone should get tested at least once in their lifetime, especially if: You have a family history of early heart disease (heart attacks or strokes before age 60). You’ve had heart problems even though your cholesterol is “normal.” You’re from certain ethnic groups (people of African descent tend to have higher Lp(a) levels).

Can you lower Lp(a)?

Here’s where things get tricky. Unlike regular cholesterol, lifestyle changes don’t really move the needle much. Eating better, exercising, and not smoking are still essential for heart health, but they won’t directly lower Lp(a). In the meantime, if you find out your Lp(a) is high, doctors usually focus on lowering other risks. That might mean: Keeping LDL cholesterol as low as possible. Controlling blood pressure and blood sugar. Using statins or other medications if needed. Adopting heart-healthy habits (Mediterranean-style diet, regular activity, stress management).

Connection Between Dental Health and Dementia Identified

We’re now just starting to understand how important dental health is to overall health. Researchers have found a connection between dental health and cognitive decline. New research shows that people with poor oral health and who are missing teeth were 21% more likely to develop Alzheimer’s and dementia later in life.

Researchers at the University of Eastern Finland carried out the study by examining 47 long-term studies that followed participants dental and cognitive health over periods of time, noting carefully those that were dementia-free at the beginning of the study. In conclusion, scientists found that those with poor dental health were 23% more likely to experience cognitive decline and 21% more likely to develop dementia. In particular, they found that tooth loss was an independent risk factor for dementia and cognitive impairment among other oral health indicators examined. “Poor periodontal health and tooth loss appear to increase the risk of both cognitive de-



cline and dementia,” the authors wrote in the study. As we age, we need to make sure we get regular cleanings from the dentist. Even if you don’t have insurance, you can often find teeth cleaning specials online (Google specials in your town or area) sometimes with an x-ray and exam included for under \$100. Do this at least once a year. And by going in to see the dentist at least once a year, they can catch problems before they become more expensive to fix. But always get a second opinion. One dentist may see a cavity or feel a need to do a major procedure like a root canal, but another dentist might not. It happens a lot so get a second opinion before doing work on your teeth.

The best way to maintain good oral health is by creating good daily habits. Dentists recommend using an electric toothbrush. And flossing every day. Good oral health is easy to maintain as long as you stay on top of it and do it every morning and night.

Cease Smoking and Restore the Harm

In a new study, researchers have confirmed that it is never too late to quit smoking. Not only does the damage to your lungs stop when you stop smoking, the damage reverses, giving you genetically healthier lungs, which have a much lower risk of turning into cancer. Researchers found that in a short period of time, former smokers developed healthy new cells to line their airways. This shift in proportion of healthy to damaged cells helps protect against cancer. “People who have smoked heavily for 30, 40 or more years often say to me that it’s too late to stop smoking—the damage is already done,” said the study’s joint senior author Dr. Peter Campbell from the Wellcome Sanger Institute. “What is so exciting about our study is that it shows that it’s never too late to quit—some of the people in our study had smoked more than 15,000 packs of cigarettes over their life, but within a few years of quitting, many of the cells lining their airways showed no evidence of damage from tobacco.”

It’s not new to think that smoking cessation creates healthier lungs. But the researchers were surprised and “were totally unprepared” over the seemingly “magical” occurrence of the airway regeneration. Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in America. By a lot. Smoking can lead to cancer because the damage from the smoke causes the cells that make up the lungs and airway to create genetic errors when replicating, causing “driver mutations” which eventually cause the cells to divide uncontrollably and become cancerous. The research is part of the \$26 million Mutographs of Cancer project: a Cancer Research UK Grand Challenge initiative conducted jointly by cancer researchers Wellcome Sanger Institute and UCL. The project detects DNA “signatures” that indicate the source of damage, to better understand the causes of cancer, and discover the ones we may not yet be aware of. Dr. Kate Gowers, joint first author from UCL, said: “Our study is the first time that scientists have looked in detail

The Key Vitamin That Prevents Dementia

There are so many supplements on the market today for cognitive health. Slowing the effects of aging on the brain is a goal for many people who take supplements as they age. There are a lot of supplement “cocktails” out there promising to do just that. But there is a key vitamin in all of them that seems to play a significant role in warding off cognitive decline. Traditionally recognized for its role in bone health and calcium homeostasis, vitamin D is now being studied for its role in maintaining cognitive health, particularly in the context of dementia.

days a week is sufficient for most people to get their dose of vitamin D. It can also be obtained from dietary sources such as fatty fish, fortified dairy products, and supplements. For people with a strict plant-based diet, getting vitamin D from natural sources may be harder. The good news is that there are a lot of fortified foods with vitamin D. Cereals, plant-based milks, orange juice, and tofu are usually fortified with vitamin D. And of course, supplements in pill or capsule form are found everywhere.

1. Meta-Analysis of Observational Studies (2023): A comprehensive



Dementia, characterized by a decline in cognitive function severe enough to interfere with daily life, includes conditions like Alzheimer’s disease. With no definitive cure currently available, prevention and risk reduction strategies are critical. Emerging research highlights the potential of vitamin D as a protective agent against cognitive decline and dementia. A study published in 2023 by the University of Calgary’s Hotchkiss Brain Institute and the University of Exeter in the United Kingdom looked at the relationship of vitamin D supplementation and dementia in over 12,388 people. They found that those who supplemented with vitamin D had 40% fewer dementia diagnoses than those who didn’t supplement with vitamin D. Vitamin D, often called the “sunshine vitamin,” is synthesized in the skin upon exposure to sunlight. Stepping out into the sunlight 10-30 minutes a day three

meta-analysis published in the journal Neurology in early 2023 reviewed data from multiple observational studies involving thousands of participants. The analysis found that individuals with low levels of vitamin D had a significantly higher risk of developing dementia and Alzheimer’s disease compared to those with sufficient levels.

2. Prospective Cohort Study (2022): A large-scale prospective cohort study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Neurology in 2022 followed over 6,000 older adults for several years. The researchers measured baseline vitamin D levels and monitored participants for cognitive decline and dementia onset. The study concluded that sufficient vitamin D levels were associated with a reduced risk of cognitive decline and dementia, suggesting a potential protective effect.

3. Randomized Controlled Trials

Why the UK is banning high-caffeine energy drinks for kids under 16

The UK government has announced plans to ban the sale of high-caffeine energy drinks to anyone under the age of 16, citing growing evidence of harm to children’s physical and mental health. Every day, around 100,000 children consume at least one high-caffeine energy drink, according to UK government data. Studies have linked these drinks to disrupted sleep, increased anxiety, poor concentration, and lower academic performance. High-sugar versions have also been tied to obesity and tooth decay.

Prime Minister Keir Starmer said in a post on X, “I won’t shy away from decisions to protect kids, even if there are the predictable cries of nanny state. We’re stopping shops from selling high-caffeine energy drinks to under-16s, so they can turn up to school ready to learn.”

Health and Social Care Secretary Wes Streeting shared a similar concern to the move, backed by parents and teachers: “How can we expect children to do well at school if they have the equivalent of four cans of cola in their system on a daily basis?” He added that the move is part of the government’s Plan for Change, which shifts focus from treatment to prevention of

poor health.

Research shows that up to one-third of children aged 13–16 and nearly one in four aged 11–12 regularly consume energy drinks. Teachers and parents have long complained that the drinks contribute to poor classroom behaviour, lack of focus, and even declining grades. Children from disadvan-



tagged backgrounds are also more likely to consume these drinks, worsening health inequalities. “The harmful effects of caffeine-loaded drinks are partly behind poor classroom behaviour. This announcement goes hand-in-hand with our work on improving mental health support in schools and ensuring children have access to a healthier food

(RCTs): While observational studies provide valuable insights, randomized controlled trials (RCTs) are the gold standard for establishing causality. Several RCTs have examined the effect of vitamin D supplementation on cognitive function. For instance, a 2023 RCT published in The Lancet involved over 2,000 participants aged 70 and older. The study found that those who received vitamin D supplements showed less cognitive decline over three years compared to those who received a placebo.

Neuroprotection: Vitamin D has been shown to have neuroprotective properties. It supports the clearance of amyloid-beta plaques, a hallmark of Alzheimer’s disease, and reduces neuroinflammation, which is implicated in the progression of dementia.

Vascular Health: Adequate vitamin D levels are associated with better cardiovascular health, which in turn supports brain health. Vascular problems can contribute to cognitive decline, and by promoting cardiovascular health, vitamin D may indirectly protect against dementia.

Neurotransmitter Regulation: Vitamin D plays a role in regulating the production of neurotransmitters, which are crucial for cognitive function and memory.

Sun Exposure: Regular, moderate sun exposure can help maintain healthy vitamin D levels. Aim for 10-30 minutes of sunlight exposure several times a week, depending on your skin type and geographical location.

Diet: Incorporate vitamin D-rich foods into your diet, such as fatty fish (salmon, mackerel), fortified dairy products, and egg yolks. It’s difficult to find good sources of vitamin D if you are vegan. Mushrooms cultivated in sunlight can be a great source. As mentioned earlier, vegans can get their vitamin D from food through supplements found in orange juice, vegan “milks”, soy products, and from cereals.

Supplements: For those at risk of vitamin D deficiency, supplements may be necessary. Many over-the-counter vitamin D pills work great. Consult with a healthcare provider to determine the appropriate dosage.



any age, significantly lowers your risk of cancer.

Great Yarmouth: Forever Favorite for Fishing & Fun

Ircus is an art form of the people. I fundamentally believe that.” I’m in Great Yarmouth for a long weekend, standing in the ring at the Hippodrome circus, bristling from that particular crackle of energy you get from an empty stage. Ringmaster Jack Jay, the fourth generation in a family of impresarios, is fresh from his annual scouting trip in search of international acts to tread the boards in Norfolk: “We have artists whose CV reads ‘Macau, Las Vegas, Great Yarmouth’,” he tells me. “That’s the standard we aim to bring in.” The Hippodrome is a national treasure, one of only two purpose-built circuses left in the country (the other is part of Blackpool Tower, which Jack’s father also managed, briefly, in the 1980s). Founded in 1903 by equestrian George Gilbert, who ran off to join the circus aged 11, it’s an ornate building with art nouveau flourishes. But the real extravaganza is the sinking floor, restored by the Jays in 1979. Using original mechanisms, the ring is transformed into a pool with fountains and synchronised swimmers for the spectacular finale. I’ve seen the show countless times and it never loses its magic.

A holiday in Yarmouth will undoubtedly involve a Jay-run establishment at some point. They have two majestic Edwardian cinemas, one of which, the Empire, recently reopened as a live music and comedy venue. And the Windmill, originally nicknamed the Palace of Light thanks to the electric bulbs that illuminated its facade, now contains one of the best crazy golf courses I’ve been to (I am something of a connoisseur), crammed full of cinema and theatre memorabilia. At this point I should add a disclaimer. I grew up on this stretch of coast and have always been Great Yarmouth’s biggest fan. My first jobs were in the caravan parks that dot the coastline, one of which employed every member of my family at some stage.

The town has always inspired me, from writing books about the maritime origins of our clothes to exhibitions about swimwear. But it has also given me an understanding of the precariousness of seasonal work and the generational impact on communities forced to deal with declining industries, from fishing and shipbuilding to leisure and tourism. While there is evidence of deprivation here, as there is in many coastal towns, there is also a strong sense of resilience. It’s a town with solid foundations, built on its twin pillars of fishing and fun. Celebrating this heritage is the Ice House, which was recently transformed into the National Centre for Outdoor Arts and Circus by the Out There Arts charity, which runs the town’s annual circus festival. Built in the 19th century to store ice to transport fish, this unique thatched structure overlooking the River Yare has been converted into a training space and performance hub complete with pop-up cafe and bar.

On our sunset walk along the promenade, my partner and I stroll past the Winter Gardens, a magnificent seafront glasshouse with enough facets to rival a diamond. Closed since 2008 and clad in hoardings, this marvel of Victorian engineering is due to reopen in 2027 and will house a cafe, exhibition and events space, and horticultural displays to mimic the floral interiors of the original. For dinner, we head to Courtyard Italian Restaurante in the historic Rows, a tangle of narrow passageways that once formed the medieval heart of the town. The candlelit space is suitably intimate, with reservations lasting the whole evening so we can linger over our meal. The award-winning chef delivers generous portions of wild mushroom linguine. Sated and sleepy, we head to our hotel, the family-run Andover House. A restored Victorian building on a leafy side street, it is remarkably peaceful considering it’s just off the bustling stretch of promenade known as the Golden Mile.

The next day, we rise early for a visit to Merrivale Model Village, a fixture since the 1960s. I visit Merrivale every time I’m in town because, from the castle to the rocket ship, I find it utterly entrancing. Like a regular town, if slightly unhinged, and tiny. And it comes complete with an excellent penny ar-



cade, a fantastic tearoom and nine-hole crazy golf. The fact that attractions such as this have not only survived but thrived is largely thanks to the flair and innovation of the travelling show folk who settled in coastal resorts such as Great Yarmouth in the mid-20th century. Joyland, a seafront institution since 1949, was established by Horace Cole, who married into a travelling show family. Inspired by this lineage, he created the Super Snails and Tyrolean Tub Twist, rides that are still going strong, run by the fourth generation of Coles. Crammed with colourful attractions, from Neptune’s Kingdom (1970s) to the Spook Express (1990s), it plays out like a hallucinogenic history of the fairground. When so much of our leisure industry is now corporatised, it’s refreshing to be in a town that is still dominated by family businesses. We head to the south end of the Golden Mile to visit the Pleasure Beach, run by the same family since the 1950s, who also trace their roots back to travelling fairs. Rides range from traditional (dodgems and the Scenic Railway wooden rollercoaster, which opened in Yarmouth in 1932 and is one of only two left in the country, the other being in Margate’s Dreamland) to the white-knuckle terror of the Sky Drop, which catapults us 22 metres above the seafront be-

“Winter Gardens is a magnificent seafront glasshouse with enough facets to rival a diamond. This marvel of Victorian engineering is due to reopen in 2027 From Neptune’s Kingdom to the Spook Express, Joyland plays out like a hallucinogenic history of the fairground”

fore plummeting back down to the ground. After a turn on the Edwardian carousel (much more my pace), we stop for lunch at Sara’s Tearooms by the fortune-telling hut. Family-run since 1999, it prides itself on homemade fare, and Sara still bakes the cakes that you can eat on the beach terrace looking out to sea. We marvel at a gigantic sailing ship while I devour a perfect fish finger sandwich.

Before fish fingers there were, of course, herrings. From the 11th century, the town’s fortunes were made by the “silver darlings” migrating down the coast, and the bloater – an ungutted, lightly smoked herring – became a Yarmouth speciality in the 1830s. A century later, sending a box of them as a holiday gift was as common as sending a postcard, with up to 5,000 crisscrossing the country every day. The Time and Tide Museum, housed in a Victorian curing works, gives visitors a visceral feel for the process (the oak-smouldered aroma still lingers in the smokehouse stacks) and a sense of the scale of an industry that once exported pickled fish to Germany and Russia and smoked fish to the Mediterranean. It also chronicles the area’s story, from the last ice age to the town’s heyday as a booming seaside resort. Great Yarmouth’s herring traditions are also kept alive in the White Swan, where we head for dinner. A seafood restaurant with a fishmonger’s

attached, it overlooks the river next to one of the medieval town wall towers. It was set up by local fisher Paul Williams, who has his own smokehouse and prepares bloaters, kippers and red herring in the original Yarmouth way. Shiplap-panelled walls strewn with netting and photographs of fishing fleets give it the convivial air of a beach hut. Highlights are oysters Rockefeller followed by hake with sea-kissed samphire and cockle veloute. We vow to return in the autumn for bloater season. Sunday morning starts with a wander through the Venetian Waterways, at the calmer north end of the seafront. Developed in the 1920s as a work scheme for unemployed men, it was designed to mimic the canals and bridges of Venice, albeit on a much smaller scale. The Waterways were recently restored as part of a seven-acre park with ornamental gardens, and include a boating lake which is home to swans, occasional herons and pedalos for hire. We round off our weekend with lunch at the Pier Hotel in nearby Gorleston, enjoying Cromer crab and sweet cured herrings with a sea view. The coastline here is glorious: miles of wide, sandy beaches, tufted with marram grass and rippled with dunes. Looking out to people paddling in the waves, I recall ringmaster Jack’s words: “It’s like a pilgrimage. Even if you only go once, you should go on holiday to Great Yarmouth.” These messages can be tiresome. But so are the challenges we face when we’re trying to uncover the truth. The Guardian’s investigations don’t happen by accident. They take time, courage and independence, and they’re powered by readers like you from India. Reader support means we can.

Your favourite mid summer trips

Ienjoyed midsummer at a rented beachside cottage in the Skåne village of Bjärred, north of Malmö, with Swedish friends. We ventured to the local church to enjoy the dancing round a midsummer pole decorated with vibrant blue and red flowers, with many local residents adorned in intricately decorated flower crowns. After taking a dip in the Öresund strait along the long jetty with its bathhouse, we towelled off to indulge in deliciously sweet strawberries and sip Briska ciders into the late hours of daylight. We spent the afternoon paddling with one foot in the Baltic and the other in the North Sea at the top of Grenen, North Jutland, Denmark. Then, we headed southwards along the beaches and through the sand dunes to Skagen to enjoy the midsummer celebration at Pippfyret, where many hundreds gathered, having travelled mostly on foot or by bicycle to experience an evening of music with songs and recital. Artists, composers and poets were among the throng round a great bon-



fire which was a sight to behold. For an easy midsummer escape from Stockholm, Vaxholm is unbeatable. A fast ferry gets you to the archipelago’s capital in under an hour. My tip is to spend the afternoon exploring the town, with its classic Falu-red wooden houses and gardens overflowing with flowers. But don’t take the last ferry back. Instead, find a spot by the water and watch as the midsummer sun refuses to set, bathing the islands in golden, pink light for hours. It’s a simple, accessible way to experience the magic of Sweden’s endless daylight without straying far from the city. Last summer, while having a break in Valencia, I found out Spanish people mark 23 June as the beginning of summer by celebrating the festival of San Juan. For a few nights around the actual date of San Juan, bonfires, wine and music on the beaches seemed to go on until dawn. The local family I was staying with invited me to choose some old furniture to burn on a beach bonfire and helped me throw it on before we danced round the fire holding

hands and singing songs to pagan gods to burn the evil of the previous year! We barbecued anchovies and sausages we had bought at Valencia’s marvellous Mercado Central at midnight before throwing ourselves into the Med at 2am – a feelgood way to celebrate midsummer, full of food, friendship and fire!

I’ve really enjoyed Ride to the Sun – a 100-mile overnight bike ride from Carlisle to Edinburgh held on 21 June. It’s inclusive, joyous, community-filled and fabulous. From the Moffat chippy queue to the midnight rave to the toasting of the sunrise on Cramond beach, it’s the best way to spend the shortest night. We stumbled upon the midsummer Noche de San Juan in Cudillero in Asturias. Religious processions gave way to paganistic bonfires where people tossed mementoes of their year to forget. Next up were fireworks and a Brazilian samba troupe. Locals explained that the mayor could justify the expense because it was a prerequisite of getting re-elected. After midnight we headed to the beach for a party fuelled by calimocho (red wine and cola, don’t ask). We retired at 8am for a breakfast of chorizo and fried eggs just as a live DJ started up.

Our midsummer stay in Le Pin, a hamlet in southern France between Bordeaux and Toulouse was rich with natural wonders, not always seen but very much heard. From shrieking swifts diving through the 19th-centu-

ry market hall in nearby Auvillar to a turtle dove purring beside a rural road, it was this bird lover’s idyll. We heard nightingale melodies throughout the day as well as after dark, and caught the calls of curl buntings, hoopoes and black redstarts. And it wasn’t just

birds. One night, crickets and frogs provided a chirruping and croaking medley – a memorable midsummer nocturne. Hiring a bike and exploring Paris for Fête de la Musique was a brilliant way to spend an urban solstice. Every year on 21

June, the city turns into one big free festival, with stages of all sizes springing up outside famous landmarks and local neighbourhood bars. Beginning in the heart of the city to catch some psychedelic guitar outside the Centre Georges Pompidou, we then pedalled past brass ensembles outside jazz bars near Jardin du Luxembourg, classic French techno along the banks of the Seine and scuzzy metal bands in squares of the 13th arrondissement.

In the golden light of midsummer, Serralunga d’Alba’s rolling vineyards (about 35 miles south-east of Turin) come alive. Staying at Cascina Meriame, a working winery with panoramic views, I savoured barolo and barbaresco wines during intimate tastings led by passionate hosts. Evenings were spent watching the sun set over the Langhe Hills, a Unesco world heritage site, while enjoying local cheeses and



nebbiolo wines. The nearby medieval castle added a touch of history to the serene landscape. For a tranquil midsummer retreat blending culture, cuisine and nature, this Piedmont gem is unparalleled.

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the little known Italian portion of this mountain range to visit old friends in the ski town Sella Nevea. The scenery is awesome: pointed white, limestone peaks above deep and mysterious pine-forested valleys. The books of mountaineer Julius Kugy romantically describe this large wilderness, the obscurity of which amazes me. Nature is abundant with various large mammals, bird life and flora. If you love alpine adventure but don’t like tourists then seek it out, there’s nobody there!

The Julian Alps are mostly in Slovenia, but I have gone on many trips to the little known Italian portion of this mountain range to visit old friends in the ski town Sella Nevea. The scenery is awesome: pointed white, limestone peaks above deep and mysterious pine-forested valleys. The books of mountaineer Julius Kugy romantically describe this large wilderness, the obscurity of which amazes me. Nature is abundant with various large mammals, bird life and flora. If you love alpine adventure but don’t like tourists then seek it out, there’s nobody there! Stora Karlsö, off the west coast of Gotland, is one of the oldest nature reserves in the world and is a few hours’ journey by train and ferry from Stockholm. It’s a tiny, rugged limestone island, mostly just a high cliff with an alvar (grassy heath) plateau. There were lots of orchids and plenty of sea birds. Once sheltered from the wind, I found the fragrant air was incredible. I spent the night in a simple cabin and enjoyed a decent meal, but civilisation in the regular fashion was far away, and there was hardly any cell reception.



Gill is going to Guwahati for the second test BCCI

Guwahati: India skipper Shubman Gill will travel to Guwahati for the second Test against South Africa despite his participation being in doubt due to a neck injury, the BCCI announced on Wednesday. 26-year-old Gill suffered the injury on the second day of the first Test that India lost by 30 runs in Kolkata. He could not bat after retiring hurt in the first innings and was even hospitalised. Shubman has been responding well to the medical treatment provided and will travel to Guwahati with the team on 19th November, 2025,” BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia said in a statement.“He will continue to be monitored by the BCCI medical team and a decision on his participation in the 2nd Test will be taken accordingly,” he added, continuing the suspense over Gill’s availability. With Gill’s participation highly unlikely, all-rounder Nitish Reddy has been taken out of the ongoing India A series against South Africa A in Rajkot.The Andhra



batting all-rounder reached Kolkata on Monday evening but did not take part in Tuesday’s net session.With a Test century to his name and being a right-hander, Reddy could be in contention for a place in the playing eleven at Guwahati if Gill is ruled out.

Vista Riders defend 109 as Ashraf shuts out Royal Champs

New Delhi: The second encounter of the day at the 2025 Abu Dhabi T10 saw the Vista Riders seal a 9-run win over the Royal Champs at the Zayed Cricket Stadium. Vista Riders posted 109/7 thanks to impactful cameos from Ben McDermott (31 off 16) and Dwaine Pretorius (31 off 12), after an early wobble triggered by Haider Razzaq’s three-wicket burst, according to a release from Abu Dhabi T10.McDermott stabilised the innings during a shaky middle phase, while Pretorius provided the late acceleration that proved crucial in a low-scoring contest. In reply, the Royal Champs looked on course during a blistering 50-run stand between Jason Roy and With 17 needed off the final over, Ashraf delivered a composed finish, conceding only seven to seal a nine-run win.Earlier, Northern Warriors pulled off a narrow four-run win over newcomers Aspen Stallions at the Zayed Cricket Stadium.The Warriors posted 114/1, led by Johnson Charles’ composed knock of 55* (34). The Stallions’ chase began with intent through Rahmanullah Gurbaz and Avishka Fernando, but tight spells from Taskin Ahmed and a superb final over from Shah Nawaz Dahani ensured the Warriors held their nerve. Charles brought up his half-century in 29 balls, while Munro continued rotating strike and finding regular boundaries. The Stallions did well to squeeze in dot balls, but couldn’t break the stand. A quiet last over meant the Warriors couldn’t fully capitalise, though Munro’s late boundary brought up an excellent 102-run partnership off 55 balls, closing the innings at 114/1.



In the shadows of 2015, a different ending Harmer

New Delhi: Simon Harmer had just bowled South Africa to a famous Test win against India at the Eden Gardens with his twin four-wicket hauls, an effort that earned him the Player of the Match award. At the presentation ceremony, Harmer was quick to recall his first tour to India a decade ago. “I have been here before, and it was a dark place.s Harmer, then in the early days of his international career, the blow landed personally as well as professionally.To his credit, he claimed respectable five-wicket match hauls in both Tests he played. But that achievement felt insignificant beside the 31 wickets taken by R Ashwin, whom Harmer had, to his detriment, chosen as his yardstick. “I was quite new to Test cricket, and Ravichandran Ashwin was bowling like a jet. It was the expectation that I needed to do the same and deal with that, and putting myself under even more pressure,” Harmer said during the Kolkata Test. The failure in India cut deep. “I’m my harshest critic. In 2015, when I got dropped from the national side, that was when I realised that I wasn’t good enough.With his career at a crossroads, Harmer decided the only option was to start over. He returned to India in 2016 to work with coach Umesh Patwal



at his academy in Mumbai.“I discovered a lot about spin bowling that I didn’t know. That was the point in my career that gave me the ammunition to get better and develop and become a decent spinner,” Harmer said.He remembers that fortnight with Patwal as the most frustrating of his life. “Basically, everything I thought I knew about spin bowling, he laughed at.”But having committed to the process, Harmer pushed through. The South African soldiered through the draining drills, his persistence leaving a strong impression on Patwal.

New Delhi: As college invitational zonal season kicked off Tuesday evening, Will Modglin of the Texas Longhorns provided the first stunning performance of the week. Tasked with leading off his team’s 200 medley relay at the Texas Invitational, just as he did on the way to an NCAA title last March, Modglin touched in 20.00 to record the fastest 50 backstroke performance ever.That time was seven hundredths faster than NC State’s Aiden Hayes clocked in 2024 (20.07) and puts Modglin on the precipice of becoming the first man ever under 19. The Texas junior is coming off a breakout summer in which he earned silver in the 100-meter backstroke at the World University Games and secured his spot on the senior-level U.S. team for next year’s Pan Pacific Championships. Now, Modglin is continuing to thrive as a central player for a Texas team aiming for back-to-back national titles. His followed up that record-setting backstroke sprint with a fine med-



ley time. Nate Germonprez went 22.59 on breaststroke, 0.24 quicker than he went on the way to the national title last year, and Kyle Peck and Garrett Gould completed the quartet. The final time was 1:21.11, less than a second behind the Longhorns’ winning mark from

the 2025 NAAs. The Texas “B” team, featuring Campbell McKean going even faster on breaststroke at 22.51, was second in 1:23.81, and Texas A&M placed third (1:24.44). The Longhorn men then dominated the 800 free relay by almost five seconds. Rex Maurer, the only

swimmer back off a team that took second at last year’s NAAs in American-record time, led off in 1:32.87, and that was surprisingly the slowest time of all four Longhorns. Camden Taylor (1:31.49), Baylor Nelson (1:31.67) and Jacob Wimberly (1:31.63) all went 1:31s on the way to a final mark of 6:07.66. USC took second in 6:12.57, with Krzysztof Chmielewski splitting 1:31.67, and Northwestern (6:16.48) rounded out the top-three. In the women’s competition, Stanford won both relays on day one. Levenia Sim, Lucy Thomas, Torri Huske and Annam Olasewere swam a time of 1:33.29, which only two teams (including the Cardinal) surpassed at last year’s NCAA Championships. Huske was dynamite on the butterfly leg, her time of 21.88 faster than any swimmer in history aside from Gretchen Walsh. Texas came in second in 1:34.69, with Eva Okaro coming home in 21.02, and Wisconsin’s time of 1:35.53 was good enough for third.

Uthappa demands that the IPL adopt a “draft” method and lengthen the league’s lifespan

Chennai: Former Indian cricketer Robin Uthappa suggested that the Indian Premier League (IPL) should move on from the concept of auctions to have “trade windows” open throughout the year and a draft system to go along with it. He also said that the league should move on from its two and the half month to a “six-month league” Uthappa was speaking on his Youtube Channel. The two-time IPL champion, once each with Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) and Chennai Super IPL should change with times. “They are not taking it beyond the start-up stage. It is baffling. You are the leading cricket league in the world. Mature now. Just get on with it. Stop with the auctions and keep the trade window open throughout the year. Have a draft and get rid of the auctions. For crying out loud, get rid of the auctions. I have been saying this even when I was playing,” he said. They are not going beyond the entertainment mindset, for TV. Even a draft can be great TV. You will get your fans engaging and create fan loyalty. Just get it going. I think it should be like a six-month league. You can have international fixtures in between. It has to evolve,” he added.



The IPL auction will be taking place in Abu Dhabi on December 16. Leading upto the auction, one of the greatest trade-off in league’s history took place during the trade window, Indian wicketkeeper-batter Sanju

Samson, the mainstay of Rajasthan Royals (RR) over the years, has been traded to five-time champions Chennai Super Kings (CSK), with the inaugural champions getting the services of Men in Yellow legend

Ravindra Jadeja and Sam Curran in return. Samson will be representing CSK from the next edition of the competition at his existing price of Rs 18 crores, while Jadeja’s league fee has been revised from Rs 18 crores to Rs 14 crores. Also, Curran has moved from CSK to “They are not taking it beyond the start-up stage. It is baffling. You are the leading cricket league in the world. Mature now. Just get on with it. Stop with the auctions and keep the trade window open throughout the year. Have a draft and get rid of the auctions. For crying out loud, get rid of the auctions. I have been saying this even when I was playing,” he said.“Abu Dhabi on December 16. Leading upto the auction, one of the greatest trade-off in league’s history tYellow legend Ravindra Jadeja and Sam Curran in return. Samson will be representing CSK from the next edition of the competition at his existing price of Rs 18 crores, while Jadeja’s league fee has been revised from Rs 18 crores to Rs 14 crores. Also, Curran has moved from CSK to RR at his existing price of Rs 2.4 crores. RR at his existing price of Rs 2.4 crores.

Australia vs England 1st Test, Ashes 2025



Mumbai: Australia and England have announced their teams as they gear up for the first Test at the Optus Stadium in Perth, starting Friday, which kicks off the Ashes 2025-26. England faced a 0-4 drubbing on its last visit Down Under, which eventually forced the side to transition into its current version. Josh Hazlewood for the series opener. Australia:England (XII): Ben Stokes (c) Jofra Archer, Gus Atkinson, Shoaib Bashir, Harry

AUS vs ENG, Ashes 2025 Test Series: The Ashes 2025 series commences this week with England aiming to reclaim the urn in Perth.

Brook, Brydon Carse, Zak Crawley, Ben Duckett, Ollie Pope, Joe Root, Jamie Smith (wk), Mark Wood. AUS vs ENG, 1st Test: Here are the live streaming details and match information for the first Ashes Test, which begins in Perth on Friday.

Ashes England keep suspense alive, name 12-man squad for Perth series opener

Perth: They’re keeping their cards close to the vest. The Ben Stokes-led team has just revealed a 12-man roster for the first Ashes Test against Australia, departing from their custom of announcing the playing XI well in advance. On Friday, November 22, Perth Stadium will host the highly anticipated series. England originally selected a 16-man Ashes squad, but they have since reduced down to 12. The pacers Josh Tongue and Matthew Potts, as well as Will Jacks and Jacob Bethel, have been left out. There had been speculation that England might field an all-pace attack for the opener, which is expected to be played on a green seamer. However, Shoaib Bashir has been included in the 12, meaning the decision on whether to



play a spinner will be left until the morning of the match. Optus Stadium curator Isaac McDonald has promised a lively surface with pace and bounce for the series opener. Early visuals of the pitch supported expectations of a green

top. However, according to the BBC, England believe the surface is slightly drier than anticipated, prompting them to keep their spin option open. England have also decided to persist with Ollie Pope at No. 3 despite his modest record in Australia, where he averages 11 in three Tests. Pope, though, strengthened his case with a century and a ninety in England’s only warm-up fixture against the Lions after arriving in Perth. There were also doubts over Mark Wood’s availability. The express pacer, who returned from a long injury layoff, was taken for scans after he bowled 8 overs in the warm-up match. Fortunately, he was cleared fit. Wood was seen bowling full tilt in England’s training session on Tuesday.

Roger Federer elected to 2026 class of International Tennis Hall of Fame

New Delhi: Swiss tennis legend Roger Federer has been elected to the 2026 class of the International Tennis Hall of Fame and will be inducted into the hall during a ceremony at Newport, Rhode Island, in August next year. The Beijing Olympic gold medalist and 20-time Grand Slam winning icon, with 103 ATP Tour-level titles, was selected in his first year of eligibility. His 24-year-old pro career came to an end in 2022, which saw him spend a record 310 weeks at the top of men’s singles rankings, with 237 weeks successively, as per Olympics.com. Federer said as per Olympics.com, “It is a tremendous honour to be inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame and to stand alongside so many of the game’s great champions. Throughout my career, I have always valued the history of tennis and the example set by those who came before me. It was very special to receive the news at Swiss Tennis, surrounded by the next generation of players -- the place where my own journey first began.” ”To be recognised in this way by the sport and by my peers



is deeply humbling. I look forward to visiting Newport next August to celebrate this special moment with the tennis community,” he added.At the age of 44, Federer is the headliner of the 2026 class, which also includes broadcaster Mary Carillo as a part of the contributor category. The induction ceremony will take place from August 27-29 at the Hall of Fame site in New-

port. Federer’s 103 career singles titles are the second most by any player in the Open era, behind Jimmy Connors’s 109, while his 20 Grand Slams include eight Wimbledon titles, six Australian Opens, five US Open triumphs and a sole French Open triumph. Besides his doubles gold at the Beijing Olympics, he secured a singles silver in London 2012 Olympics.

Will Modglin Splits 20.00 50 Backstroke, Torri Huske Shines Texas Invitational